THE
MODERN CHURCHMAN

By identifying the new learning with heresy, you make orthodoxy synonymous with ignorance.—*Erasmus*

A State without the means of change is without the means of its conservation.—*Edmund Burke*

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MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY

By the Chairman of the Conference, Dr. W. H. C. Frend, T.D., D.Phil., F.S.A.

When you first invited me to be your Chairman at this conference I wondered what theme we could best discuss. Many people have told me these last years that the Modern Churchmen's Union had had its day, and that it should now wind itself up. Yet, when you discuss religious questions with these people and with others in Europe, you will generally find that what they are looking for are ideas which we are pledged to express.

Therefore our main objective must be to represent to our fellows, not only the historical Modernism of the early years of this century, but a contemporary view of life and of the Christian religion in terms that our day can understand. 'Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and for ever', the theme of our President's sermon, is the message of our movement.

We move from the Modern to the Contemporary in religion, and our programme is designed to help us to do so. Great advances have been made in our knowledge of the material and intellectual environment in which Our Lord grew up. The Dead Sea community of Essenes (or Covenanters) represent a popular movement in Judaism exactly contemporary with Jesus. There seems to be little doubt that some aspects of the life and worship of the early Church were influenced by forms derived from this community, and some light on the ministry of John the Baptist and the Fourth Gospel may be shed from the same source. Thus, for the first time since the death of the last of the Apostles, Christians have means of comparing Jesus' life and teaching with that of a contemporary community, inspired by ideals in some ways similar to those he handed on to the early Christian community. The new Gnostic discoveries too, have

provided further information about religious ideas in the world in which St. Paul preached, and Professor Brandon has made a detailed study of this aspect of Gnosticism. Dr. Parker will be analysing for us, in a way new to some of us who think of late Judaism expressing itself largely in apocalyptic, the Jewish background of the Incarnation.

That is our foundation. The Christian religion is a historical one, which means that we take 'suffered under Pontius Pilate' quite literally. Our basis for understanding it must therefore contain historical truth. The greater our knowledge of Palestine of that period, the better. And then, we apply the second phrase in the President's text, 'Jesus Christ today'. We shall hear of the contrast between ancient and modern Christian thought, and between the ancient and modern attitude towards Nature.

Later on we have three papers on aspects of our contemporary world; Biology, by Canon Raven, Chemistry by Dr. Peacocke, and Racial Problems by Dr. Howard Smith. Each will see what Christianity offers in these fields. No holds are barred. We seek the truth. We deal in facts, not generalities.

This work is of far more than academic importance. If one thinks of it, all the great religious systems of the world are facing a similar challenge from the age in which we live. This may be summed up by the fact that they all grew up in the environment of the Ancient World, and now, with startling suddenness, since the beginning of this century, these old familiar landmarks of thought and material culture have ceased to exist. Even in the 1930's the Mediterranean world in which Islam was dominant from the eighth century A.D. onwards was still quite recognisable alongside the French or Italian colonisation of North Africa. The same could be said of Hinduism in India. But this is no longer true, and the reaction of the adherents of these age-old religions and cultures is instructive.

Broadly speaking, religion and nationalism have become identified. In parts of the Middle East, Islam = Arab Nationalism, and that openly so. It is much the same story in Ceylon, where the murder of Premier Bandaranaike by a Buddhist priest for not being nationalist enough in the latter's view, brought this astonishing situation home to European eyes. These are certainly temporary solutions. They have the same importance in history as the identification of Roman Catholicism with Irish nationalism, or the stubborn adherence of the Afrikaaner to the Dutch Reformed Church. But the identification of religion with nationalism is not only a brittle defence of both, but is unacceptable to the Christian, and indeed to any truly religious person. Jahwe is not the God of the Christian Church.

That does not mean that all is well with us. Our own world is the heir to the thought of the American, French and Russian revolutions, and it is the world of Marx, Darwin and Einstein. The landmarks of both Reformation and Counter-Reformation have disappeared too. We see the

reaction of Christians developing along three alternative lines. The first is to let matters take their course and drift. This is not always a bad thing. There are times when one should be slow to make up one's mind (South Africa's relations with the Commonwealth is perhaps a case in point today). The Asquithian 'Wait and See' is not always a lazy man's excuse. But, carried over a long period, it can be profoundly discouraging. 'The Church of England dithers, so let's find someone who doesn't!'

The person who thinks like that will find two opposite tendencies to choose from. First, the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries produced an attempt to understand the Bible as literature, and to apply to its study the same canons of literary and historical criticism that have been applied to any other work. With this development was associated the 'quest for the historical Jesus', the attempt to peel away the accretions of myth and dogma applied by the early Church and reach finally the figure of the Lord. But the evidence has been inadequate. The Gospels are not biographies, and it has been impossible to arrive at an historical portrait in any way satisfying to the inquiring mind. The result has often been Rationalism or a sense of helplessness and frustration, the feeling that Biblical criticism had destroyed the Bible without putting any other authority in its place.

The second development has attempted to fill that lack by enhancing the claims of the Church. The figure of Jesus has been withdrawn from human study. Incarnate God, far removed from our earthly lives, He stands stiff and hieratic in the stained glass window. Redemption and forgiveness of sins have become the work of human intermediaries who, we are taught, bridge the gulf between mankind and the Trinity. The Virgin Mary has become the Nestorian Christ. Three new dogmas in the space of a hundred years have been declared 'necessary for salvation', and each has the purpose of removing Jesus further and further from his role as pattern and inspirer of our earthly lives.

Religion, under this development, has become a flight from Reason,[1] a protection from 'abysses of doubt', an escape. It is the situation one so often finds in Graham Greene; accept all or nothing, and no half-way house between the acceptance of every iota of priestly lore and the outer darkness of 'paganism'. It is not an attitude of mind friendly to the Anglican Communion, still less to us. No one can turn from the recent correspondence in *The Times* concerning the Roman Catholic Mayor of Chester's attendance at a Civic Service at Chester Cathedral without a shudder of disgust.

This view of Christ is Gnostic rather than Christian and, like other Docetic Christologies, it falls down when it comes to the test of Christian behaviour. Ignatius of Antioch, when he pointed to the inevitable lack of

[1]Cf. Kierkegaard's 'the absurd is the object of faith, the only object that can be believed'. (R. Bretall, *Kierkegaard Anthology*, Princeton, 1946, 22s.)

charity among his Docetic opponents (*to the Smyrnaeans*, Ch. 6) may have been mad, but he was no fool. And so, when we ask ourselves what the large Roman Catholic community in this country has done for the welfare of its fellow citizens, we are not wholly surprised when we discover that the answer is, 'very little'. Quakers and non-conformists of all types have shared with the Anglican Communion in creating the modern system of education, local government, and taxation. Social reform has been inspired from the preacher's pulpit rather than from Karl Marx. But, one looks in vain for any single act of social reform initiated and sponsored by the Roman Catholics in the last century. Betting shops, more children in an already overcrowded island, and a repressive penal code for offenders seem to be the main contribution of their leaders to the problems of contemporary life. Moreover, if we look at the lives of some of their most distinguished members, one finds the same indifference to social problems. Newman's refusal of a slum parish in Oxford in 1840, and Evelyn Waugh's description of Mgr. Knox's literary life among his patrician converts (E. Waugh, *Ronald Knox,* pp. 250 ff.) tell their own story. The challenge of the age has been avoided. And, as Christians are taught to judge people and organizations by their fruits, one can only agree with Father Witcutt, sometime a Roman and now an Anglican priest, that 'the conversion of the English people to religion was far outside the power of the Church of Rome. . . . Only one Church can possibly convert the English people, the English Church.' (*They Became Anglicans,* ed. Morgan, p. 158).

But this said, it must be admitted that there has been excuse for the negative, fundamentalist viewpoint. It represents a wistful psychology of despair. Only when liberalism in Church affairs ceased to be entirely critical and destructive, and when the Anglican Communion itself began to take vital decisions, as it has regarding Family Planning, could the attractions of the flight from Reason be met fairly and squarely.

This is where our Union comes in. We must get out of our minds the idea that we are an episode, like Arianism, Pelagianism, Monophysitism or Donatism, an -ism to be snuffed out by some fire brigade of orthodoxy. That was the old way of teaching Church history. Today we see these 'heresies' as trends of Christian thought, often influenced by their environment, representing great traditions of religion and culture. Our movement belongs to a tradition of liberal Christian thought stretching back as far as the Alexandrian fathers, Clement and Origen, a tradition which believes that man is made in God's image, and through free will, is able to develop his personality towards communion with God. It is optimistic, it despises no truth, and it is contemporary. Our duty is to take Christianity off scholastic perches, to understand the world in which we live, and express the Christian religion in terms that our world can understand. All truth is God's truth. We can best serve the Anglican

Communion in expressing this in the words of our Conference theme—to follow Jesus Christ and to know His World and Ours.

In conclusion, readers of the Conference papers in this issue will be interested in the following item which appeared in the *Guardian* of 9 August under the heading 'Modern Churchmen's Union as focus of liberal thought'.

A new liberal movement of thought and inquiry is developing out of the reformed Modern Churchmen's Union, which now has the Bishop of Birmingham as president. Its annual conferenee at Cambridge was better attended than in recent years, and many younger scientists, philosophers, and historians are joining the movement.

The Bishop of Birmingham, in a statement on the future of liberalism in the Church of England, said that a new tradition was developing which was extremely important for the future of an intelligible Christian faith. The liberal movement was a positive as well as a critical one. It sought to create a climate of opinion which would help the thoughtful layman to link his faith with the contemporary issues now facing the world.

Christianity had got to 'come off its scholastic perch', said Dr. W. H. C. Frend, chairman of this year's conference and Fellow of Caius College, Cambridge. Dr. Frend said there were three situations to which the new generation of modern Churchmen were addressing themselves. They were the political realignments in all parts of the world, the scientific revolution, and the archaeological discoveries which were providing fresh evidence on the origins of the Christian movement.

In the view of the Rev. W. G. Fallows, principal of Ripon Hall, Oxford, and chairman of next year's conference, Christian thinkers needed to assimilate the results of scientific discovery in a spirit of 'reverent agnosticism' rather than in the dogmatic authoritarian mood so often adopted by the Church.

W.H.C.F.

CONFERENCE SERMON

By The Right Reverend J. L. Wilson, C.M.G., D.D. (Bishop of Birmingham)

'Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and forever.'
—Hebrews xiii, 8.

There are three laws of social evolution which make it very difficult to assess a current philosophy of life.

First there is an undulating alternation of periods of relative stability with periods of relative chaos: the present age is one of relative chaos.

Secondly, there is a tendency to continuous increase in complexity: that tendency has now been operating for a long time.

Thirdly, there are, in any society, different levels of culture, and the lower levels lag behind the upper.

The thought of the present age is chaotic and complex. The issues are so many, and the controversy so bitter, that it would seem to be beyond the power of any man to see modern life as a whole, and impossible for any two men, thinking they see, to agree upon what they see.

In modern thought there are various degrees of 'modernity'. The most alert and independent minds of any age are aloof. Behind them there is a graduated lag of less enterprising and less well-informed thinking, tardily awakened as fresh ideas trickle down and back from the centres of culture and the outposts of discovery. At the foot of the scale the men of one age think with the minds of the age before, or, at most, pay uncomprehending lip service to new ideas, while in sentiment and conduct they remain under the dominion of an absolute culture.

It is not surprising, therefore, that a great deal of contemporary thought, and still more of contemporary sentiment, faced by the spectacle of universal disruption which this age presents, holds hard to assumptions whose explicit attainment and general approval were the glory of the nineteenth century—the transcendent sanctity of the National State, the virtue of making money, the importance of being at least half-educated, the right to vote, the unity of Nature, the sure progress of Society towards perfection of institutions, science and morals.

Though the preachers be discordant, the prophets unintelligible, and the people feverish and exhausted, it is yet possible, if the enquiry is limited for the most part to the English-speaking peoples, to find certain presuppositions upon which our modern culture depends.

One of these presuppositions is a common belief that the world's material wealth ought to be increased as much as possible—that the richer the world, the better the world. And though we may dispute about the best means of accumulating wealth, about the best means of securing its fair distribution, and about what we mean by a 'fair' distribution, it is clear

that our whole culture depends upon the presupposition that material wealth is good, and that a lot of it is better. How hardly shall they that lack riches enter into the Kingdom of this world!

By far the greater part of our culture specifically aims at the improvement of the material order. Those departments of culture which do not so aim—that is the unpractical studies, such as metaphysics and art—are generally treated as 'divertissements' and subsidiary to the serious business of life. It is not that we deny the ultimate importance of metaphysical problems and spiritual values: it is that we regard their importance as being secondary rather than primary.

We have allowed the spectacle of an evolutionary process to dominate our scale of values. We see our spiritual destiny, not as our first concern, but as the end of a process, and therefore as something remote, not urgent; we see it as an evolutionary consequence, not as an object of direct pursuit.

And so the stuff of our culture is the apparatus of research and paraphernalia of refinement:

'Seek ye first all these things, and the Kingdom of God shall be added unto you.

The absolute dependence of our material organization upon scientific progress, and the astonishing triumphs of scientific discovery, have promoted the enthronement of science and of the scientific method. Not only do we owe our present condition to achievements of science in the past, but we bank on more achievements to come: we fear that, were science but to halt or hesitate, we should be lost, we count on scientific discovery to solve for us innumerable and pressing problems—the future of nuclear energy, the conquest of disease, rapid communications, cheap houses, smokeless fuel, eugenics.

Nothing inspires confidence so much as to know that this or that matter has been 'scientifically' handled—whatever that may mean. We are prepared to believe anything that is 'scientific'.

For practical purposes the scientific spirit is a literal spirit, a spirit of precision, a spirit which exorcises mystery and sternly forbids a symbol to be more than a symbol.

This literal spirit has flavoured our whole thought, and has a corrosive effect upon religious beliefs.

Of such elements the modern temper is composed. It is not a temper which responds readily to the appeal of religion. The Christian religion presents the life and death and resurrection of Jesus as a challenge to our whole scale of values, appealing for a reversal of these values.

It offers a reality of the spirit which transcends and transforms, without escaping or refusing to acknowledge the reality of the brass tack; and in that reality of spirit a permanent abode for the soul set free from servility to the work of men's hands.

It presents the world as God's world, and God as Love, and calls upon man to accept the responsibility of repentance, turning to God, waiting upon Him, and taking His will as the measure of all things.

The Christian religion insists that a life without active and truly felt reference to God is no life but an idiot's tale that ends in dusty death, that life with God is richer and fuller and more real, not sentimental and attenuated; that vigour, accomplishment, commonsense, practicality, understanding and wisdom—all those things which are sought in the service of Mammon—are truly to be found only as the Gifts of the Spirit. Why then are there so few ready to reserve the gifts? Perhaps the answer is simply inertia.

Whatever may be said of the validity of spiritual experience it is clear that considerable mental effort is required to rise above the plane of Mammon. When all our resistance to the religious appeal have given way, our plea in the last resort is that we cannot be bothered. We cannot be bothered to kick off the blankets of mundane preoccupation. We cannot be bothered to concentrate and to imagine. We despise prayer which is a mere formal exercise. And to pray with heart and soul is quite definitely hard work. And so we postpone the issue. The world is very full and there is plenty to think about. Perhaps a time will come when we shall tire of the world and be glad to turn for refreshment and consolation to a new sphere of experience, as to cool water after too much wine.

It is possible that this inertia provides the ultimate explanation of modern scepticism. When the modern 'rational' age is contrasted with Mediaeval Theocracy, the historian feels bound to account for the change. If he believes religion to be an illusion, he will say that in process of time the mistake was discovered; and so there is really nothing to explain.

But if he does not believe religion to be an illusion, he will probably summon an array of political, social and intellectual changes which have made religious faith difficult to maintain.

But these changes in the mode and structure of our life themselves require explanation, and are as much symptoms as causes.

The truth probably is that to fall down from the level of spiritual insight is as natural to man as to be idle when circumstances permit. True religion has probably been always a possession of the few. There have been times in history when the genious, energy and devotion of a few have been able to cast the institutions of a continent and the thought of an age in a religious mould; but that does not prove that the average man has been more truly spiritual in one age than in another. The eventual effect of the Renaissance has probably been to unmask worldliness rather than to create it. And the reason why religion means so little to us to-day is because human nature will always, whenever it has a chance, forsake the spiritual for the material. That may be the common-sense of the doctrine of Original Sin.

It may be objected that it is superficial to base irreligion upon inertia, and that the root cause—the real Original Sin—is, as Brunner argues in *The Theology of Crisis*, man's proud refusal to surrender his claim to autonomy—the same motive that prompts his desire to meet God on equal terms of justice, rather than on the one-sided terms of Divine forgiveness.

This pride is no doubt the grounds of what appears as inertia. But I have tried to represent the situation from the point of view of the unregenerate, and have continued to use language appropriate to the unregenerate.

To the sort of man whose response to the religious appeal we have considered, religion appears not as a re-orientation but as a régime of supernormal moral and imaginative effort—as something which for the most part a man achieves for himself.

To his (humanistic) way of thinking, religious faith connotes attainment rather than repentance and reconciliation, and its rejection implies inertia rather than sin. If he analysed his inertia, he might disclose pride, but as he is, from Brunner's point of view, living in sin, he is unlikely to appreciate his sin as sin. The pride which to Brunner is 'the heart of sin' is to a man of this sort something quite proper and almost virtuous. The note of this ethic is Fortitude, and its issue is tragedy.

Tragedy is the topmost peak of Humanism; it is the blazing collision of man's wretchedness with his nobility, in which both are burnt out.

Whatever Christianity may be, it is not tragic; it contains the world's greatest tragedy, but transcends it; and the defeat of tragedy, which humanism can never accomplish, is wrought by the Grace of God.

Stephen Neill ends his stimulating book, *The Unfinished Task*, with these words: 'It is as the Crucified that Jesus draws the hearts of men to Himself. The rendering of Psalm 96: 10 given in some manuscripts of the Septuagint is not original, but it is true; Tell it out among the heathen that the Lord hath reigned from the tree'.

This is the strangest of all transformations. God has taken that place of horror and disaster and made it the place of peace. In our darkest house of despair, it is to the Cross that we turn to find consolation. When we are tempted to doubt everything, it is the Cross that tells us plainly that God is Love. Bowed down by the sense of failure, we turn to the Cross and receive the grace of forgiveness. When the way is not clear before us, and we hesitate about the vocation of a lifetime, it is the Crucified who says to us, 'Follow me'. In the situation of the world today whether it has parallels in history or not we have with us the Risen Christ and His Spirit, the Holy Spirit, will guide us, enlighten us and sustain us in all our perplexities.

THE GNOSTICS AND THEIR PROBLEM

By the Rev. Dr. S. G. F. Brandon,
Professor of Comparative Religion in the University of Manchester

I have to deal with a subject, which by its very name, 'Gnosticism', surely conjures up a picture of something essentially esoteric and remote from the Christian faith as we know it today. There is indeed much justification for such an impression, because Gnosticism was essentially concerned with esoteric issues, and probably those members of my audience who once studied Early Church history will wryly recall how they struggled to remember the strange terms and understand the complicated ideas which were contained in the chapter on Gnosticism in their approved text-books. I myself have a very lively recollection of my own early studies of the subject—to me it seemed that the Gnostics were very tiresome people who in the first centuries of Christianity perversely complicated the simple, straightforward faith of the Gospels. I fully sympathised with the early Church Fathers who condemned them as pernicious heretics, and I was only too glad to dismiss them as constituting an unnecessary burden for the young student of Church History.

Today, however, Gnosticism is coming to assume a new importance for our understanding of the origins of Christianity and of the way in which the orthodox form of the Christian religion was developed. The reason for this change of situation is twofold. Let us take the more obvious and dramatic cause first.

In 1945 in Upper Egypt some peasants, in the course of their digging near the village of Nag Hammadi, discovered a large earthenware jar. In it they found thirteen leather-bound volumes of papyrus manuscripts. Eventually twelve of the volumes were acquired by the Coptic Museum in Cairo, while the thirteenth found its way by devious means to the Jung Institute at Zürich. When scholars were able to examine these volumes, it was found that they contained forty-nine separate treatises written in Coptic, which was the native language of Egypt during the Roman period. On closer study it was seen that most of these writings were Gnostic works. They bear some interesting and curious titles, of which the following are some notable examples: The *Gospel of Thomas;* the *Apocryphon of John;* the *Revelation of James;* the *Gospel of Truth;* the *Revelation of Adam to his son Seth;* the *Holy Book of the Great Invisible Spirit;* the *Sayings of Zoroaster concerning Truth.* There are also four Hermetic tractates—the inclusion of these particular writings is especially significant, and I shall have more to say about the matter presently. The nature of these documents discovered at Nag Hammadi, and the fact that they were found not far from the site of the ancient Christian monastery of Chenoboskion, indicate that they probably formed the library of a local

Christian Gnostic community and had been hidden away, undoubtedly during some period of danger, possibly due to persecution.[1]

Now, the discovery of these documents is calculated to give a fresh impetus to the study of Gnosticism, because hitherto we have possessed very few actual Gnostic writings and most of our information about the movement has come from the champions of orthodoxy who were concerned to condemn it. It has, accordingly, been necessary in the past to recognize that our knowledge of Gnosticism had been formed mainly on the evidence of hostile witnesses, and might, therefore, be distorted by prejudice. With the Nag Hammadi writings we shall now be able to judge the Gnostics by their own utterances.

But that is not the whole significance of the present situation. If these Gnostic documents had been discovered last century, it is likely that they would not have received very sympathetic treatment and would have been evaluated as but confirming the orthodox condemnation of Gnosticism. Today, fortunately, there is a different climate of opinion about Christian Origins. The researches of scholars during the last hundred years have steadily shown that the beginnings of Christianity were not the simple divinely guided process taught by the traditional theology. It has come to be realised, even by the ultra-conservatives, that the New Testament writings cannot be taken at their face value as an accurate objective record of the early days of the faith; instead, they have to be interpreted as the tendentious, though honest, expressions of various aspects of a highly complex situation. Moreover, these conclusions have recently been notably reinforced by another remarkable discovery. For, the now famous Dead Sea Scrolls, which were found just two years after the discovery of the Nag Hammadi documents, but which have enjoyed priority of publication, have shown that in Palestine itself during the lifetime of Jesus certain important religious ideas were current which were probably derived from alien sources of inspiration.[2] Appreciation

[1]The most complete accounts of the Nag Hammadi documents so far seem to be, J. Doresse, *Secret Books of the Egyptian Gnostics* (E.T., London, 1959); W. C. Van Unnick, *Evangelium aus dem Nilsand* (Frankfurt-am-Main, 1960); see also F. L. Cross (ed.), *The Jung Codex* (London, 1955); *The Gospel according to Thomas* (Coptic text and English trans. by A. Guillaumont etc., London-Leiden, 1959); W. Till, 'New Sayings of Jesus in the recently discovered Coptic "Gospel of Thomas"', in *The Bulletin of John Rylands Library*, vol. 41 (Manchester, 1959); R. M. Grant and D. M. Freedman, *The Secret Sayings of Jesus* (London, 1960); R. McL. Wilson, *The Gnostic Problem* (London, 1958); G. Quispel, *Gnosis als Weltreligion* (Zürich, 1951); A. J. Festugière, 'Hermétisme et Gnose paienne', in *Histoire générale des Religions* (ed. M. Gorce et R. Mortier, Paris, 1947) t. III; *La Révélation d'Hermès Trismégiste*, IV. (*Le Dieu inconnu et la Gnose*), Paris, 1954. Cf. the present writer's articles 'The Gnostic Problem', in *The Modern Churchman*, III (n.s.), and 'The Gnostic Problem in Early Christianity', in *History Today*, vol. x (1960).

[2]On the question of the presence of Gnostic ideas among the Qumran community cf. Bo Reicke in *New Testament Studies*, I (1955), pp. 137-141; M. Burrows, *The Dead Sea Scrolls* (London, 1956), pp. 251-262.

of these various factors, therefore, now disposes scholars to look with fresh interest at Gnosticism as being more intimately involved in the beginnings and early development of Christianity than was formerly realised or admitted; indeed, instead of seeing Gnosticism as a strange aberration from the true and original form of the Christian faith, the possibility has to be reckoned with that Catholic orthodoxy and Christian Gnosticism may more truly be regarded as two different forms of belief that evolved from the complex process of adapting the original Jewish version of Christianity to the needs and tastes of Graeco-Roman society, into which it was carried by missionaries like Paul.

But by this time you will probably be thinking that it would be helpful if I were to give you a definition of Gnosticism or say exactly who the Gnostics were. I cannot, unfortunately, attempt to do this without plunging at this stage into a very involved discussion of some very complicated evidence, because the whole question of the origin of Gnosticism is one upon which specialists in this subject have still not reached agreement. But for our present purpose it may perhaps help if I were to remind you that the word 'Gnosticism' is derived from the Greek word *gnosis,* meaning 'knowledge'. However, the 'knowledge' referred to here is a secret or esoteric knowledge which certain groups of people in the ancient world claimed to have about the true nature of man in the scheme of the universe.[3] This *gnosis* or knowledge was supposed to be given by special revelation to those who had been prepared for its reception, and it was believed that its possession enabled one to achieve salvation from the wretched and fatal condition in which mankind was generally assumed to be placed. We shall, I think, best learn what kind of beliefs such *gnosis* involved by considering certain passages from the writings of Saint Paul.

Now, first, let us be careful to remember that the Epistles of Paul are the earliest Christian documents that we possess. They show us what the Christian faith was like some two decades after the Crucifixion. And at this time, let us bear in mind, there was yet no Christian theology as such and none of the great foundational doctrines had been fully worked out and officially promulgated. To us, who have inherited the long-established doctrines of Christianity, it is difficult to realise what a tremendous transformation was made during the first century, when Jesus came to be worshipped as the Divine Saviour of mankind. To us, that seems to be his obvious God-given rôle, and we naturally tend to assume that Jesus was recognized as such from the very beginning of the movement associated with his name. But the evidence of the New Testament writings reveal a very different situation. The original disciples recognized

[3]Cf. E. F. Scott in *Encycl. of Religion and Ethics* (ed. J. Hastings), VI, pp. 231a-232a; *Theologisches Wörterbuch z. N.T.* (ed. G. Kittel), I, pp. 692-6.

Jesus, not as the saviour of mankind, but as the Messiah of Israel.[4] This was, of course, an understandable thing for them to do, because both they and their Master were Jews, and at that time the Jews were looking for the promised coming of the Messiah, i.e. God's Anointed One, who was to redeem Israel from the oppression of its heathen oppressors. The Crucifixion of Jesus had, inevitably, proved a terrible contradiction to the disciples' belief in his Messianic character, but the Resurrection experiences had re-inspired them and led them to find an explanation of the tragic event in the sacred scriptures of their nation, and so they looked forward with fervent faith to the glorious return of their Master on the clouds of heaven 'to restore the kingdom again to Israel'.

But, we must now be careful to notice, while Jesus could be intelligibly proclaimed to the Jews as the Messiah of Israel, he could not be primarily presented as such to non-Jews—to Syrians, Greeks and Romans. The Messiah of Israel would have meant little or nothing to them; indeed, to the contrary, the title would more likely have stirred their hatred and contempt, because anti-Semitic feeling was strong at that time. Consequently, if Jesus were to be presented to the Gentiles, it had to be in a rôle or character which they would understand and appreciate as being relevant to their own spiritual needs. This was indeed done, as we see from his Letters, by Paul—he presented Jesus to the Gentiles as the Divine Saviour of mankind, who saved by his own sacrificial death. But such a presentation meant a most serious break from the basic tenets of Judaism, because no such saviour was expected in Jewish tradition and it would have been shocking to the deepest Jewish instincts even to suggest that the Messiah of Israel should die to save the hated Gentiles who were oppressing Israel. And this was not all that was involved in proclaiming Jesus as the divine saviour of mankind; for the very idea of such a saviour implied that the human race was in some perilous situation from which its members had to be saved and could only be saved by the intervention of this saviour. Accordingly, it is obvious that Paul could not have gone with any hope of success into the market-places of the various cities of Asia Minor and Greece and told the men and women whom he met there that Jesus would save them, unless they were already conscious of their need of some kind of spiritual salvation, and were familiar with the idea of a divine saviour.

This being so, it is illuminating to consider certain passages from Paul's Letters which are concerned with such matters. But, in considering them, let me remind you again of the important fact that, when Paul wrote, there was yet no Christian theology—in fact Paul was in the process of constructing it or rather suggesting it, and he does so in a kind of unpremeditated manner as he seeks to deal with various issues of current con-

[4]Cf. S. G. F. Brandon, *The Fall of Jerusalem and the Christian Church* (London, 1957), Chapter 5.

cern in his letters to his converts. And, a further point of great importance to be borne in mind, Paul's genius lay in catching at the inspiration of the moment, to utter some idea pregnant with meaning for the future, but one which he rarely stopped to define carefully: indeed in his writings Paul is essentially the inspired prophet or poet, not the logical systematic thinker.

With those qualifications carefully made, let us first consider a passage of key-importance for understanding Paul's soteriology. It occurs in his First Corinthian Epistle, chapter 2, verses 6-8. Previous to this passage, Paul had been contrasting his teaching with that of other teachers known to his readers, and this leads him on to give the following significant account of the quintessence of his own teaching: 'Howbeit we speak wisdom among the perfect: yet a wisdom not of this world, nor of the rulers of this world, which are coming to nought: but we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, *even* the *wisdom* that hath been hidden, which God fore-ordained before the worlds unto our glory: which none of the rulers of this world knoweth: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.' I have quoted this passage in the Revised Version. Now, in both our official translations, the Authorised and the Revised, the true meaning of the passage is obscured at two crucial points. The Greek word *aion,* which is translated 'world' here, severally in its singular and plural forms, does not mean this physical world or earth upon which we live, but 'time' or 'age'. This word *aion,* or the idea that it expresses, has a long and complicated history and it was connected with an esoteric system of 'world-ages' which probably derived ultimately from Babylonian and Iranian astrological speculation.[5] We know that such esoteric ideas were much in vogue at this period in the Graeco-Roman world, in which Paul and his converts lived. The other place in the passage under consideration in which our English translations are misleading is that in which it is told that the 'rulers of this world', not recognizing the 'Lord of glory', crucified him. Now, it is natural with the English rendering to take the words 'the rulers of this world' to mean Pontius Pilate and the Jewish authorities who, according to the Gospel record, were responsible for the death of Jesus. But the original Greek words, used by Paul here, namely *archontes tou aionos toutou,* do not mean these earthly rulers, but daemonic beings who were believed to inhabit the planets and control the lives of men.[6] Consequently, we find, on examining this passage in the light of contemporary Graeco-Roman thought, that Paul was seeking to explain to his readers at Corinth what he calls 'God's wisdom in a mystery', namely, how the salvation

[5]Cf. H. Sasse, 'Aion', in *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum,* I, 193-204.

[6]Cf. M. Dibelius, 'Archonten', in *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum,* I, 631-3.

of mankind was achieved, in a very esoteric manner. He is in effect claiming a secret *gnosis* or knowledge of God's wisdom, hitherto hidden, which he may only communicate to those whom he calls *tois teleiois*, i.e. 'the perfect', a term which, significantly, was used in the mystery religions of pagan society for those who were fully initiated into them. Accordingly, Paul reveals that, before the beginning of a series of 'aions' or 'world-ages', in one of which his readers were then living, God had planned to do something, as he describes it, for their glory. This consisted, apparently, in sending a mysterious, and presumably a divine, being into the world in such a guise that the *archontes,* who ruled this present 'aion', did not recognize him, and, therefore, for some unexplained reason, crucified him. We may legitimately conclude from the logic of Paul's statement that, by this unwitting act, the *archontes* had in some way been worsted and that their loss had been to the advantage or 'glory' of Paul's converts.

Now, this is all very strange and mysterious, and far removed from what we should like to regard as the simple Gospel story; but, let us remember, that Paul was writing this some twenty years before the first Gospel was written and within twenty years of the Crucifixion itself. What was Paul trying to do here? From the mention of the Crucifixion we may surely assume that he was identifying the death of the mysterious pre-existent 'Lord of glory' with the historical Jesus of Nazareth.[7] But he has taken the crucifixion of Jesus, which was an historical event that occurred in Judaea about the year A.D. 28 or 30, completely out of its historical setting. And he represents it, not as the tragic event that was brought about by Roman policy and Jewish hatred, but as an esoteric happening that God had planned before the 'aions', of which the subject should be this mysterious 'Lord of glory', and the unwitting agents the *archontes,* who ruled the present 'aion'. In other words, it appears that Paul is seeking a find a supernatural explanation for the crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth, and he does this by identifying the historical Jesus with a supernatural pre-existent being, whom God apparently sends into this world to deceive and thereby confound the equally mysterious *archontes* who rule here.

From this point we are naturally led next to ask, what was the purpose of this strange transaction? Since it was obviously to the discomfiture of the *archontes* and it redounded to the glory of Paul's converts, we must enquire more closely about Paul's view of these *archontes*. As we have seen, the term was used in current Graeco-Roman astral belief for the daemonic beings who were thought to inhabit the planets and control the lives of men. Confirmation that such ideas were familiar to Paul is found in his use of an equivalent expression in other writings. Thus in his

[7]Cf. R. M. Grant, *Gnosticism and Early Christianity* (New York, 1959), pp. 62-3; M. Werner, *The Formation of Christian Dogma* (E.T., London, 1957), pp. 122 f.

Epistle to the Galatians (iv. 8-9), he reproves his converts for some form of apostasy: 'Howbeit at that time, not knowing God, ye were in bondage to them which by nature are no gods: but now ye are come to know God, or rather to be known of God, how turn ye back to the weak and beggarly rudiments, whereunto ye desire to be in bondage over again?' The key-word here for us is 'rudiments', in Greek *stoicheia,* or, as Paul uses the term earlier in this fourth chapter of *Galatians* (verse 3), *Stoicheia tou kosmou,* the 'rudiments or elements of the world'.[8] From this passage we see, then, that Paul regarded men and women before their conversion to Christ to be in a condition of bondage to these daemonic beings or elemental spirits, who were associated with the planets. Further, in his *Epistle to the Colossians* (ii. 20), we find Paul referring to his converts having 'died with Christ from the *stoicheia* of the world', which evidently is an aspect of the same idea that finds expression, as we have seen, in the second chapter of the First Corinthian Epistle.

From Paul's statements and allusions in these various passages we can, accordingly, get an insight into the way in which he presented Jesus as the saviour of mankind. We see that he viewed the human race as being enslaved to certain daemonic beings associated with the planets, a situation which was evidently fatal. He does not explain how mankind came to be in such a situation, but he clearly implies that its members could not by their own efforts emancipate themselves from it. To save them from this state of perdition God had made a plan even before the commencement of the aeons. This plan involved the eventual incarnation of a supernatural being in the person of the historical Jesus of Nazareth, and it was done in such a way as to deceive the daemonic masters of mankind. Consequently, for some unexplained reason, they crucified the Lord of glory, and, thereby, in some way lost their hold over men, who in turn made good their escape from the fatal bondage, apparently by being ritually assimilated in baptism to him who thus had died but risen again.[9]

Now, you will undoubtedly be thinking that such a doctrine is full of strange and esoteric imagery, and you may wonder how Paul came to be thinking along such lines. Well, we have already noted the nature of the task which confronted him when he sought to present the crucified Jesus, whom the Jewish Christians recognised as the Messiah of Israel, to the Gentiles as the divine saviour of mankind. We have next to see whether we can identify any of the imagery or thought-system, in terms of which Paul apparently sought to work out and present his soteriology.

There exists a series of writings of religio-philosophical character called *Hermetica.* It is so called, because its contents purport to be revelations made by Hermes Trismegistos, the 'Thrice-great Hermes', which was a

[8]Cf. W. Bauer, *Wörterbuch zum N.T.* (1928) 1233 *sub nom.* 3.
[9]Cf. *Romans* vi, 3-5.

Greek title for the ancient Egyptian god of wisdom, Thoth. These documents, which are written in Greek, present a difficult problem to scholars who seek to understand their origin. The latest editor of the so-called *Corpus Hermeticum* would date its composition for some time in the period A.D. 100 to 300;[10] but it is probable that it incorporates older traditions. Among its contents Egyptian, Greek, Chaldean, Iranian and Jewish influences have been discerned. These Hermetic writings clearly document beliefs and speculations concerning human nature and destiny, drawn from various sources, and current during the period of the rise and formation of Christianity. They are, moreover, of special interest to us here, because, as we have seen, the Christian Gnostic community at Nag Hammadi possessed four Hermetic tractates in Coptic translation.

One of the most notable of these Hermetic tractates, entitled the *Poimandres,* contains a remarkable account of how the composite character of human nature originated, and how the immortal soul might free itself from its imprisonment in the physical body and return to its proper communion with God.[11] It is obvious, as we know from this and other sources, that in Graeco-Roman society at this time there was a deep-rooted feeling that physical matter was the source of corruption, suffering and death, and that the soul, by nature etherial and immortal, was degraded by having to inhabit a physical body and share in its misery. Men sought for some means whereby they might be saved from this wretched condition, and it was believed that such means, if found, must include an understanding of the secret cause of the etherial soul's involvement in corrupting matter. Hence the purpose of the revelation, or *gnosis,* that the *Poimandres* purports to convey. The account begins by envisaging God, as Supreme Mind (*Nous*), comprehending the attributes of male and female, and existing as life and light. This Supreme Mind produces a Creative Mind, the source of fire and breath (*pneuma*). In turn, the Creative Mind fashions the seven Governors (*dioiketai*), which are the seven planets that encircle the earth and whose government is called *Heimarmene,* i.e. Destiny. The work of creation proceeds, and it reaches its crucial drama, when the Supreme Mind produces the Archetypal Man, *Anthropos.* This *Anthropos,* desiring himself to create, descends from his original place with the Supreme Mind and enters the planetary spheres and becomes involved with their Governors. Then he plunges lower through the spheres and comes to earth, where he cohabits with Nature (*Phusis*). From this union mankind stems, and therefrom derives its duality of nature: man is mortal physically, but immortal by reason of his descent from the Archetypal Man; he is also subject to destiny and the slave of the planetary order. But the *Poimandres* teaches

[10] A. D. Nock, *Corpus Hermeticum* (ed. A. D. Nock and A. J. Festugière, Paris, 1945), t.i., p. v.

[11] *Poimandres,* I, 12-26 in *Corpus Hermeticum,* t.i., pp. 10-16.

that man's condition, though wretched, is not hopeless; because he who understands its divine *gnosis* and lives accordingly, at death is freed from the mortal prison of his body, and he is able to ascend, first to the planetary spheres where he resigns those qualities which his archetype had taken therefrom, then he continues upwards until he is united with God, the Supreme Mind.

Now, all this undoubtedly sounds very esoteric and bizarre to us; but its witness is very significant. Here we have an attempt to explain the human situation as wretched, because the immortal soul of man has become imprisoned in a mortal body and is subject to the rule of the planetary powers. Salvation depends upon having the right *gnosis,* which, of course, can only be revealed to the initiated, and its process includes deliverance from the rulers of the planets, whom Paul called the *archontes.*

It would be very unsound on the strength of these similarities to suppose that Paul, in fashioning his soteriology, consciously drew on this Hermetic scheme. But what is important for our understanding of the development of his teaching is that such ideas and terminology were current in the society in which Paul had been brought up (if he were a native of Tarsus) and to which he laboured to present Jesus as the saviour of mankind. In other words, Paul was able to talk to his audiences in Greece and Asia Minor about their need of salvation and find an intelligent response, because both he and they believed that they were in a state of subjection to the daemonic beings who controlled the planets, which determined the destinies of men.

It is important now that we notice that in this Hermetic scheme of salvation there was no saviour as such: salvation here was to be achieved by comprehending the secret *gnosis* or knowledge and living henceforth in the light of that knowledge. But Christianity, because it took its origin from the life and person of Jesus of Nazareth, had its very *raison d'être* in the rôle which it assigned to him. As we have seen, in its original Jewish form the rôle of Jesus was that of the Messiah of Israel, who was soon to return in glory on the clouds of heaven 'to restore the kingdom again to Israel'. Since such a rôle would have been irrelevant to the spiritual needs of those who were not Jews, we have found Paul presenting Jesus as the divine saviour of mankind in terms of certain recognisable views of the human situation current in contemporary Graeco-Roman society. Now, the concept of a divine saviour was, of course, not unknown to those whom Paul sought to evangelise. The so-called mystery-religions of the pagan world were nearly all centred about some divine hero who was believed to be able to confer eternal blessedness upon his devotees. The most remarkable of these saviour gods, and the most ancient, was the Egyptian Osiris, who was believed to have been raised to life again after

his unjust death at the hands of a wicked being called Set.[12] From the days of the *Pyramid Texts,* i.e. from about 2,400 B.C., it was also thought that the dead, by ritual assimilation to Osiris, would be raised to a new life.[13] But in these various mystery-cults the actual death of the divine heroes concerned had no intrinsic significance; it rather represented the common fate over which the hero had ultimately triumphed. However, as we have seen, in presenting Jesus as the saviour of men, Paul had sought to show that his actual death was an essential factor in the scheme of salvation. As Paul interpreted it in the passages we considered, the Crucifixion had in some unexplained way broken the hold of the daemonic *archontes* over mankind: and it is here, I think, that we have one of the most distinctive differences between what we might fairly call orthodox Christian Gnosticism and that which eventually came to be condemned as heretical.

In a very real sense all those who accepted Jesus as the saviour of mankind were Gnostics, since they all believed that they had been initiated into a divinely revealed knowledge of God's plan of salvation, with all which that implied of insight into man's need to be saved from some condition of mortal danger. But the question of interpreting the significance of the Crucifixion became an issue on which opinions differed. As we have seen, Paul, probably owing to the psychology of his own conversion, was led to interpret the Crucifixion as the very means by which Jesus achieved mankind's salvation, and he thereby initiated a tradition of interpretation which was destined to become the classic form of Christian soteriology. But there were others who could not see that the Crucifixion could have this significance. To them Christ was indeed the saviour, but he saved by the knowledge which he revealed to them of the true state of their soul and of how communion could be re-established with God. The Crucifixion of Jesus they found both an unpalatable and an irrelevant fact; they could not see in it the soteriological significance that Paul had discerned and proclaimed. Hence we have those Gnostic interpretations of the Crucifixion which seem so scandalous to orthodox tradition: that of the so-called Docetists who held that the body of Christ was not real and that he only seemed to suffer on the cross, and the attempt of those others who sought to distinguish between the heavenly Christ and the human Jesus, saying that the former forsook the latter at the Crucifixion so that it was only Jesus who suffered and died, while Christ returned to heaven.[14] Such ideas we naturally find both fantastic and shocking, and we feel that those who held them were

[12]Cf. H. Bonnet, *Reallexikon der aegyptischen Religionsgeschichte* (Berlin, 1952), pp. 568-576.

[13]Cf. S. G. F. Brandon in *Numen* VI (1959), pp. 115-118.

[14]Cf. E. F. Scott, *op. cit.,* VI, p. 237a.

rightly condemned by the Church as heretics. But, if instead of condemning such Gnostic theories instantly, we reflect a little more deeply on the motives behind them, I think that, not only shall we understand better a period of vital development in Christian doctrine, but we shall also understand more clearly a most serious problem that now perplexes Christian thought.

As we have seen, to present the historical Jesus of Nazareth as the divine saviour of mankind involved a most tremendous transformation of ideas. We see the basic pattern of this change being worked out by the genius of Paul. Claiming a special revelation from God, Paul interpreted the Crucifixion as a divinely pre-ordained event of which the subject was a mysterious supernatural being whom he calls the 'Lord of glory' and the unwitting agents were the daemonic *archontes*. As we also noted, this interpretation implied an identification of this mysterious 'Lord of glory' with the historical Jesus; but the actual historical event of the Crucifixion itself was completely lifted out of its historical setting. Now, in the writings of Paul, which have come down to us, we nowhere find him facing up to the obvious and fundamental problems involved in identifying the historical Jesus with the supernatural pre-existent being designated the 'Lord of Glory'. On the contrary, and this is very significant, there are strong indications that Paul was little interested in the historical Jesus, beyond the supreme fact of his death, and that he thought primarily of the Risen, Heavenly Christ.[15]

But this Pauline soteriology, and the Christology that went with it, came to supply the basic pattern of subsequent Christian theological thought, being, as it was, fraught with inconsistencies and contradictory suggestions. As later thinkers began to develop this pattern, they inevitably became involved in its problems. They all, by virtue of the fact that they were Christians, revered Jesus Christ as the saviour of mankind; but when they came to define in what sense they understood his soteriological character and office, opinions diverged seriously. The issue turned on the meaning of the Crucifixion, and here Paul's Christology was essentially ambiguous. He had implied that the historical Jesus was identical with the supernatural 'Lord of glory', but he had left grounds also for thinking of them as two separate beings. This ambiguity reveals itself in the subsequent speculations of Catholic and Gnostic thinkers, as they come to grapple with the problem of interpreting the Crucifixion. The Gnostics, seeing Christ essentially as the divine saviour who descended from the heavens to reveal the knowledge of salvation to men, were perplexed by the fact of the Crucifixion and solved its problem, as we have seen, by distinguishing between the heavenly Christ and the human Jesus. The Catholic Fathers, whose opinions duly became the orthodoxy of the Church, followed the Pauline lead in regarding the

[15]Brandon, *Fall of Jerusalem*, pp. 55-8.

Crucifixion as the actual means by which man's salvation had been accomplished. This interpretation in turn meant the absolute and essential identification of the heavenly Christ and the human Jesus. It lead, too, to that essential reference to the life of the historical Jesus, as recorded in the Gospels, which has ever since remained the characteristic of orthodox Christianity, in both its Catholic and Protestant forms. But now this very emphasis upon the essential significance of the historical Jesus and his Crucifixion, which has been the strength of orthodox Christianity hitherto, is today, as a result of modern historical research, proving the most serious problem facing Christian apologetics. Consequently, it is well for us to look at the Gnostics and their problem both more sympathetically and more acutely, because they sought in their generation to find a solution to a problem that still confronts us today, and perhaps with even greater urgency, namely, the problem of relating spiritual experience to historical fact.

THE CHRISTIAN FAITH IN A SCIENTIFIC CULTURE

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That the society in which we live is especially conditioned by the ethics, methods, techniques, achievements and dangers of scientific endeavour is a commonplace that needs no elaboration. Scarcely a day passes without at least two of the major items of news selected to appear on the front page of our major national newspapers being concerned with some new problem raised by technological development and scientific discovery—whether it be remote (problems of space travel), dangerous (nuclear warfare), personal (A.I.D.) or merely frustrating (road congestion). It is to men and women living in such a society and so conditioned, even if their knowledge of science is quite fragmentary, that the Church proclaims its faith. There are, of course, psychological, sociological, and pastoral aspects of the difficulties which the Church faces in making such a proclamation. But this paper has been written in the conviction that more fundamental than all these is the fact that modern man is refusing to listen to the Church simply because he cannot believe that her message is true and that her beliefs make sense of his experience.

The attitudes which prevent the free course of the Gospel are not so much taught as caught in our Society—as the approach of many advertisements abundantly proves. These are imbued through and through with the assumption that only so-called scientific evidence is proof, that only quantitative enumeration allows valid judgment, that the new must be better, that the possession of many things constitutes the good life. The attitudes which are necessitated by scientific discovery are exalted and carried over into the whole of life in a way which builds a barrier to the very different assumptions on which the Christian proclamation is

founded. These attitudes, which are more consciously and explicitly held by many practising scientists, must therefore first be examined; examples of the way in which the actual content of scientific knowledge is still affecting classical Christian beliefs will then be discussed.

But this is only one aspect, and that the more defensive of the interaction of the present scientific culture with the Christian faith. For the Christian faith has its own wisdom which it can bring to bear upon this culture, and neglect of which will, in the long run, spell disaster. This must therefore be examined. Finally, some features of our immediate situation and its demands will be discussed.

I. *The effect of attitudes derived from science on the communication of the Christian faith*

(*a*) Scientific thinking is necessarily *abstract*. For its particular purpose it is often precluded from considering a phenomenon in its wholeness. The specifically personal reaction of the observer has, as far as possible, to be eliminated and only elements which can be generalised are allowed to be abstracted from the total concrete situation. Referring to the non-personal character of scientific accounts of phenomena Whitehead wrote:[1]

> 'Nature is a dull affair, soundless, scentless, colourless; merely the hurrying of material, endlessly, meaninglessly.'

To minds accustomed to thinking in such a way it is often easier to concede the existence of a God who is First Cause, Universal Mind, the Ground of Existence—an abstract, final hypothesis, which subsumes all other generalisations and laws—than it is to think of God as Father, or as Love, or, hardest of all, as Incarnate.

But the abstract language, to which science is necessarily committed, is inadequate to convey the fullness of our ordinary experience of one another, let alone our relation to God. Somehow the ultimate validity of personal values must be conveyed to a generation which increasingly uses abstract modes of thought. The distinction must be made clear between different modes of human experience and the criteria of value and of authority that pertain to these various modes. Because of its prestige science is creating the only standard in realms of experience where other criteria are more valid.

(*b*) The concept of *process* is one of the commonest images in the biological and physical sciences. The idea of patterns, whether molecular or at a higher level which undergo modification in time is at the root of much scientific description. Thus dynamic concepts which refer to processes set against a time scale are, more than ever before, an automatic part of our thinking. In consequence it may well be that some of the traditional language of Christian teaching will have to be re-shaped.

[1] A. N. Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World* (Macmillan, 1925).

God's creative and redemptive acts in Christ are probably more readily regarded by our contemporaries as a process than as a great dramatic once-for-all resolution of the tension between the holiness of God and man's imperfection and sin. In its wisdom, the Church has never accepted exclusively any one doctrine of the Atonement, and the imagery used to convey the meaning of that act has varied greatly in different periods. An appropriate imagery is more likely to be found today, by a scientifically conditioned generation, in the idea of God in Christ actively re-creating and redeeming men here and now in the dynamic action of His Holy Spirit, continuing to make effective that which God did for man in Christ, rather than in the idea of a past event whereby, once and for all, Christ victoriously defeated the powers of evil.

In the total mystery which is the Incarnation and Atonement, these classical images make an extremely important and, indeed, essential contribution. But I suggest that modern scientifically conditioned man can not reach the point of seeing that there is any mystery or revelation in the Incarnation and Atonement until this action of God in Christ is made real to him in his own thought forms. Creation is not a single act but a process in time and God's act of redemption whereby men are made whole, are 'saved', is a process whose origin is in the ultimate character of God himself; 'The Lamb slain from foundation of the world'.

The loss of the practice of prayer and contemplation is frequently ascribed to the external conditions of our modern existence. But it seems possible that this is closely connected with the demand of the modern mind to make its mental images out of entities that move or participate in a process in time. We are a long way from the world of Plato's Ideas and that of Dante's Beatific Vision, but perhaps not so far removed from the world of Moses and the Hebrew prophets and even of Our Lord himself, who revealed God not in terms of being but in terms of action. What God was in himself, only the Son could know, but he could be seen in what he had done in Israel's history, and supremely in what he was doing in the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Christ—a process to be continued down the ages in the life of the Church.

This is not to decry the disciplines which can lead us to contemplation and true prayer but to remind ourselves of something that Christians in all ages have discovered, namely that God is first known in obedience and action, that the 'truth', as in the Fourth Gospel, is primarily to be done, rather than contemplated.

(*c*) The idea of *discovery* and of *research* dominates science and is indeed its very life. To the public at large this idea becomes so disseminated as to imply that only the new is true or important—and the Christian faith takes on the aspect of an outdated hypothesis superseded in the same sort of way as, say, the phlogiston theory of combustion was superseded. This

antiquarian atmosphere which surrounds the Christian faith is, needless to say, only thickened and rendered more impenetrable by much of our worship—whether it be the not-quite Christian language of some Hebrew worship (rendered into sixteenth-century English) or the sentimental language of many nineteenth century hymns. Yet to those of us whose minds have been quickened by our apprehension of Christ—or rather by *His* apprehension of *us*—the faith is not at all like this. Things 'new and old' are brought out of the treasures of Christ and our vision of the meaning of all our existence is continually being made more comprehensive and meaningful. The Holy Catholic Church is also Apostolic not only in the sense that it has a deposit of truth which it inherits from the long-past apostles, but also because it is 'sent' to comprehend 'all things' in Christ. Entry ino the life of faith is not a hedging around of intellectual endeavour by a series of barriers which confine the free play of the mind, it is initiation into a more comprehensive liberty in which all of life is interpreted in terms of the purpose which called it into existence. The giver of this life is none other than God the Holy Spirit Himself who operates supremely in His Church—the community of the Holy Spirit. Here is where real discovery lies, here is the research for which a man can give his all—the pearl of great price, the treasure hidden in the field. It is to this sense of new discovery which we must appeal—to the absolutely correct intuition of our contemporaries that man is a pilgrim and adventurer. Life in Christ is all of this and more, but we tend in the Church to lose our sense of zest and intellectual adventure and appear too readily to be defending the past, simply because it is past.

But even scientific discovery is not simply a replacement of the old *by* the new—the popular view is a perversion. Science widens the scope of its concepts more by a process in which new observations are explained in terms of the previously known and new hypotheses are imaginative transformations of earlier ones. When this is realised the contradiction between, say, the laws of Newton and the laws of relativity is seen as apparent only, each referring to different conditions, or types of observation, or sensitivity of measurement. This seems to me not to be very different from the activity of that Christian who, while holding to the faith of the Church as expressed in its historical affirmations, can yet see the Christian life as a voyage of discovery not opposed to science but in partnership with it.

(*d*) Presupposed by all scientific discovery and research is *intellectual integrity* on the part of the investigators. This willingness to follow wherever the argument and evidence leads is still the ideal of science and, as such, one of its great contributions to our civilisation—even though, in practice, the scientist in his work is often a captive of his own ideas, methods, prejudices, and personal ambition. Intellectual integrity is, of course, not a value invented by scientists, but it is a value of which man has become more widely aware through science and the success of scien-

tific methods. We sometimes assume that only scientists have this quality of integrity, but in fact it is the basis of all sound scholarship, not least of theological study. But how often do we hear from our pulpits any genuine and honest admission of the difficulties of, for example, New Testament scholarship? Such ignoring of difficulties gives an impression of intellectual dishonesty which is a sure foundation for subsequent agnosticism amongst those who eventually discover the real situation. Is it quite impossible, pastorally speaking, to be honest in our teaching?

II. *Scientific discovery and the content of Christian belief*

As our knowledge of the universe has grown through the application of scientific methods, there has been a continuous erosion of the picture of the universe in terms of which the Christian faith has traditionally presented its revelation. The process of adjustment has proved to be uncomfortable but it has had the virtue of distinguishing for us the more central and specifically Christian affirmations from those which depended on a particular and partial understanding of the physical universe. However the process has not ceased and developments in psychology and anthropology may prove even more unpalatable to the traditional Christian scheme. Because there are so many instances of such interaction, only a few of more current interest have been chosen.

(*a*) *The nature of man.*

The origin of man was, as is well known, the *cause célèbre* in the now classical—archetypal almost—controversy between T. H. Huxley and Bishop Wilberforce and still continues into our own day in the pages of the *Observer*, where Sir Julian Huxley and Dr. Mascall have recently controverted on the same theme. It seems to me that many Christian teachers and preachers here come very close to the 'double-thinking' of which Sir Julian Huxley accuses them. Only rarely does any discussion of original sin and of man's redemption by Christ attempt to take into account man's evolutionary history. Obviously this is a point where Christian terminology must recognise the new knowledge of man that we now have and to accept it whole-heartedly for its new insights, not grudgingly because we have to adjust our ideas. The germ of such an insight into the meaning of God's redemptive act in Christ lies indeed within the New Testament itself which describes Christ as the 'Second Adam', Man as he ought to be, Man as God intended he should be. The very name 'Adam' means simply 'man', and the title 'Son of Man' which Our Lord especially appropriated to Himself, has deep undertones of the idea of the true representation of man in his proper being.[2] In this light, the Incarnation and Atonement may be seen as God's great self-giving act in history whereby the evolutionary process was uniquely lifted on to an entirely

[2]S. Mowinckel, *He that cometh*, Ch. X (Blackwell, Eng. trans. G. Anderson 1956).

new level, so that in Christ men now have the right to become sons of God, and human society find its true unity through the Spirit of God working in it. Thus the scientific study of man's biological origins gives a new point to the revelation that is in Christ—a revelation not only of God but also of man. It seems unfortunate that, although Sir Julian Huxley is prepared to see evolution as now proceeding by 'psychosocial selection',[3] and as becoming 'internalized, conscious and self-directing',[4] he is unaware that the Church sees in Christ the climax of human evolution, if one may so express it. In Christ, God has acted decisively to bring the evolution of man to the climax He has eternally purposed—to the point where man can freely respond to Himself and come into a new relationship with Him. This way of speaking of God's act in Christ seems to me to weld into a more profound unity our understanding of the Word of God, the Second Person of the Trinity, as revealed both in the person of Christ and in the created world.

(*b*) *Cosmology.*

The scale of the physical universe revealed by astronomy seems to transcend anything which the human imagination can grasp. According to a recent estimate our galaxy, the Milky Way, contains 10^{11} stars and there are at least 10^{9} such galaxies. Yet a 3-tier universe is still implied in much of our religious language, in our creeds and in our prayers. Recognition of this fact prompts the impulse to 'de-mythologise' and, whatever may be thought of particular attempts in that direction, there is no doubt of the necessity of the process if we are not to talk nonsense to people who know the facts. This necessity is indeed widely recognised by Christian thinkers, but one may doubt how far a reasoned restatement of Christian truth has penetrated the regular teaching and preaching of the Church. A sense of awe when contemplating the universe has been the experience of sensitive minds throughout the ages from the Psalmist (Ps. 83-4) and Pascal to, in our own day, Professor Hoyle.[5]

What *is* new is that this awareness of the state of the universe is much more widespread through television, through the launching of earth satellites and through public discussion of the possibilities of travel in space—not to mention science fiction. A more comprehensive understanding of man's place in the whole scheme of things is demanded by this knowledge. One of the intriguing problems that is raised is whether the Incarnation could have occurred on other planets in forms of self-conscious, intelligent life other than our own. Perhaps in such speculative realms the best approach is left to poetry, in the words of Alice Meynell ('Christ in the Universe'):

[3]The *Observer*, 24 July, 1960.
[4]*Evolution as a process* (Allen & Unwin, 1954).
[5]*Religion and the Scientist*, ed. M. Stockwood (S.C.M. Press, 1959), p. 60.

With this ambiguous earth,
His dealings have been told us. These abide:
The signal to a maid, the human birth,
The lesson, and the young Man crucified.

Nor in our little day,
May His devices with the heavens be guessed,
His pilgrimage to thread the Milky Way,
Or His bestowals there be manifest.

But in the eternities,
Doubtless we shall compare together, hear
A million alien Gospels, in what guise
He trod the Pleiades, the Lyre, the Bear.

(*c*) *Miracles.*

The dominance of science in our culture has made commonplace the idea of the regularity of the physical universe as usually implied in the, far from precise, phrase, 'the laws of nature'. To quote Hoyle (*loc. cit.*) again '. . . by a formal religion I mean a belief in the miracles of Jesus and in the Virgin Birth, belief in these events that if they ever occurred must have contradicted the very fabric of the world as we know it . . . the clash between science and religion is a clash between science and formal religion'. Although most modern theologians would not now regard the miracle stories of the Gospels as necessary proofs of Our Lord's divinity, their currently favoured approach (e.g. A. Richardson, 'The Miracle Stories of the Gospels') does not adequately allow for the difficulties of this feature of the New Testament for modern scientifically conditioned man. This theological approach rightly sees the miracles in their first-century setting as 'signs', the true meaning of which as pointers to Jesus as the Christ could only be apprehended by personal faith in Him. We are reminded that all recorded history is event-plus-interpretation and that we must simply trust the apostolic witness. This 'take it or leave it' attitude is nicely adjusted to rouse the suspicions of the scientist, for it affords no criterion for rejecting *any* reported miracle. There is surely a profound difference between the declaration that a given event happened in history and the declaration that an author described it as happening. Our pre-suppositions affect our assessment of the evidence and these pre-suppositions may vary with respect to the three major groups of miracles (those of healing, the nature miracles, and miraculous events in Jesus' life). This is widely recognised but it is less often admitted that, even when we recognise God as Creator and thus accept the possibility of specific action by Him in His universe in ways we could not previously have foreseen, other considerations still affect our assessment of the available evidence. We cannot help having a scale of probability on which the miracles are variously placed, the most probable being the events which revealed who Jesus was, the least probable (to my mind) being the nature miracles. From recent studies we can now understand better what the stories of the nature

miracles must have implied for a first century Christian (e.g. the daemonic significance of the stilling of the storm and the eucharistic meaning of the feedings) but as to *what actually happened* we may well judge that it is now impossible to determine. A reverent agnosticism about some of the miracle stories seems to me to be perfectly compatible with a complete and full belief in the Incarnation and this should be made clear to our contemporaries. For a variety of converging reasons, one may, in time, come to accept that all of the miracles occurred as recorded but this is not a necessary conclusion. We may have to remain agnostic about some matters for which there is insufficient evidence, however much the stories have been revered in the past. Such a reverent agnosticism is in any case advisable on the grounds that the relation between those activities which we call mental and those we call physical is still obscure and mysterious: we are in no position finally to assert what 'matter' is in itself.

III. *The need of a scientific culture for the Church.*

For many years the Church has appeared to be always on the defensive against the progressive erosion by scientific advances of what it has hitherto believed. But it seems to me that the time has now come for a strong counter-offensive, for our scientific culture is likely to run amok and lead to the degradation of both man and nature if it continues to ignore certain Christian insights into our situation. Most scientists and technologists would no doubt be surprised to hear that the Christian faith has anything to say to our condition. But God has a word to speak in the present situation which is as vital and relevant as anything which He said through the Hebrew prophets. This need for the exercise by the Church of its prophetic and priestly role in the midst of our scientific culture can be illustrated in three ways.

(a) *The moral dilemmas of the scientist.*

The fact that the scientist cannot dissociate himself indefinitely from the moral and social consequences of his work has never been more strikingly shown than by the sequence of events which led up to the dropping of the first atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Jungk has described[6] the dramatic story of how a group of some of Europe's finest scientific minds, many of them refugees from Hitler, persuaded the Allied Governments, and in particular that of the United States, to try to obtain the atomic bomb before Germany. Reluctant as they were to use their knowledge and to bend their efforts in this way, it seemed to them that they were faced with a new social responsibility, since the victory of Hitler would have meant the ultimate annihilation of their kinsfolk in Europe. The moment of truth came in 1945 when the occupation of much of Germany revealed

[6]R. Jungk. *Brighter Than a Thousand Suns* (Gollancz, 1958).

that the Germans were in fact a long way from producing an atomic bomb, yet the military machine went inexorably on its way and, although the Japanese were on the verge of capitulation, the bombs fell on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It would be too easy to blame the scientists, many of whom protested against these actions, for not being able to foresee the complex interlocking webs of military and political power in which they were being enmeshed. But we may properly ask if we are giving our scientists and technologists today an adequate understanding of the values by which man stands or falls. Many of our young scientists and technologists are persuaded into work on military weapons of the most devastating kind. As long as the work is interesting and well paid, the question of whether it *ought* to be undertaken is hardly ever put to them. If the question were faced, where could they turn for insight and wisdom and, a decision having been made, for the corporate strength to uphold them in a politically unpopular decision? Is not this what the Church is meant to be—a fellowship of those prepared to face the critical moral decisions of our day in the light of Christ and through the power of the Holy Spirit to enable their judgment to be sound and to be expressed in action? What the Society of Friends has been to conscientious objectors in the past in upholding them when all else failed, so the whole Church might be now to those who are pressed by society to prostitute their intellectual and scientific gifts in the cause of ends inimical to man.

(*b*) *Stewardship.*

The concept of the responsibility of the individual Christian with respect to time, money and property has long been a part of Christian teaching even if in practice it is often ignored. The idea of stewardship in regard to the resources of society has only slowly gained ground among Christians.

The increase of man's power over natural resources is now becoming so rapid that it impinges on every one of us and, indeed, many of our current social decisions concern such disputes. The Church can properly point to that ancient story of man's arrival in the world through the will of God:

> 'And God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them. And God blessed them and said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.' (Gen. i, 27, 28.)

In this ancient story, man it depicted as God's vicegerent on earth, ruling it, but always recognising and consciously acting within the ultimate sovereignty of God. The story, still under the image of a sequence of events in time, goes on to tell how man failed to hold that right relation to his environment because he lost his right relation to God. 'Ye shall be as

gods' said the Tempter and from that moment man is depicted as set in opposition to his environment.

If this is the right clue, and I think it is, the Church should be actively thinking, through its members who have the necessary economic and technical training, of how the resources of the world are to be used so that modern man's greed does not destroy the due heritage of his successors, by trying to double our own standard of living 'in 25 years'. The world does not exist for man to plunder but for him to tend and cherish and conserve. The story in Genesis suggests that the increasing contemporary dominance of man over his physical environment is within the destiny which God has willed for him. But it also reminds us sternly and unequivocally that this dominance can only be fruitful and conducive to the good of all creation if it is exercised in conscious obedience to God's will. The Christian community must day in and day out act to support all agencies (e.g., within the U.N.O.) which are seeking to put this principle into practice. It might even attempt to introduce another criterion besides profit into what new goods and materials are produced by our industries.

(*c*) *The sacraments.*

It is common to decry from the pulpit the 'materialism' of our present civilization, meaning by this our obsession with the material goods of life. This is right and proper but it must not be forgotten that the Christian faith is centred in One who was Incarnate in this material world. William Temple has stressed this fact in a striking passage.[7] 'Christianity is the most materialistic of all great religions . . . based as it is on the Incarnation, [it] regards matter as destined to be the vehicle and instrument of spirit, and spirit as fully actual so far as it controls and directs matter. Thus . . . the sacraments of the Church are appointed means of grace wherein the Lord of the Church makes use, for His central purpose, of the character implanted by Him in the constitution of the universe as a whole.'

It has been said that there are for us *two* perfect sacraments by which the divine is brought to us; the order of nature and the person of Christ. In the first we see only as in a mirror dimly, but in the other face to face. But the two come together through the continuous action of God's grace in the sacraments of the Church. When Our Lord took the bread and said, 'This . . . my body', it was an act of prophetic symbolism whereby the act really effected what it symbolised by placing a new value on the material stuff of the universe. This value was already implicit in the Incarnation, but in His sacramental act Jesus made it explicit and it continues to be made explicit in the sacramental life of the Church. As Christians, we too readily acquiesce in a trite dichotomy between physical and spiri-

[7] W. Temple, *Readings in St. John's Gospel* (Macmillan), pp. xx, xxi.

tual, forgetting that such a separation is both basically unscientific and un-Christian: unscientific because, as far as we know, self-consciousness and awareness of God have only arisen in physical organisms evolved to the stage of the human person, and un-Christian in so far as the dichotomy is no necessary part of the Biblical revelation based as it is on the Hebrew view of human personality. By His Incarnation, God in Christ has shown once and for all the value that He places on our actual existence in the flesh since He has taken that existence and made it His own.

Thus the central act of Christian worship continually testifies to a unified and profound insight into the meaning of our actual existence in which we use, eat and are part of the material world which we survey. Perhaps this is most dramatically emphasized by the reflection that every atom of our present bodies has probably existed for some millions of years and will continue to do so—their brief arrangement in our bodies being only a transitory disposition.

We must not so 'super-naturalize' the Christian revelation as to make it lose all touch with life as it actually is. For we have a message of real significance to take to our contemporaries about the meaning of our finite existence in the world of matter—for its real purpose and end have been shown by the Incarnation of God in Christ and by His Resurrection and Ascension, and that end can only be realised in us here and now by God the Holy Spirit making us one with Christ. 'He became what we are, that we might become what He is'.

IV. *The present situation.*

How, in fact, is the Church faring, possessing as she does all these treasures which our contemporaries need as much as we have known ourselves to need them? I am not competent to survey this situation fully and there are indeed, here and there, signs of a new flexibility. But I have seen no signs that the Church is in fact succeeding in convincing men of the *truth* of its faith and that then it is only man's inertia and sin and lack of 'singleness' of eye which is holding him back. Amongst the laity, the defection of adolescents continues and, although much of this may well be due to various sociological pressures, I cannot help thinking that much of this defection arises because we fail to convince the young enquiring mind of the truth of what we teach. Again, over the last 50 years, by far the greatest defection from our churches has been among men, for two-thirds or more of our congregations are women. Now it is the men who have been most deeply affected in their work and attitudes by the growth of science and technology, for women's work, even if outside the home, still tends to be concerned with people. These observations suggest to me the need for a far more convincing apologetic than we have yet been able to give to a scientifically conditioned generation.

But who is to devise and teach it? For our clergy do not, on the whole, have the intellectual equipment if one goes by the evidence of surveys of the posts taken by university graduates. According to one such (made in 1949-50, but the situation has not changed much in this respect since then), less than one per cent. of all those in the ministries of all the churches had any scientific training. The figure would be even lower if non-graduate ministers were taken into account. The early over-specialization of the secondary educational system accentuates the problem, for men reading arts subjects rarely have any scientific education after the age of about 14. It is not urged that a scientific training is requisite for the study of theology or pastoralia, but it does seem disastrous that the leadership of the churches should be so devoid of men whose training could give them an understanding of the chief formative influence in our culture.

Even more disturbing is the evidence in the same report that the official ministries of the churches have a smaller proportion of men with first and second class honours degrees than practically any other profession.

In the first 4 centuries of its existence, the Church not only out-lived but out-thought its contemporaries. Men like Origen, Augustine and the Cappadocian Fathers were the intellectual peers of their own culture. Yet the Church today, faced by a situation which is just as challenging through the rapidity of the breakdown of old patterns of life, is apparently failing to recruit the best minds for its service. But there are many Christian students in the universities, so there must be potentialities not yet fully utilised. The Church of England's need for new forms of ministry is not only as an auxiliary for the hard-pressed parish priest but also to enable the Church to survive in the intellectual climate of our day. We need to find new means of focusing and utilising the Church's intellectual forces in teaching, preaching and all modern forms of communication. Those who undertake this task must be as wholly committed to Christ and His Church as any Jesuit in the Counter-Reformation and yet have the courage and resources to plunge deeply into new knowledge and modes of thought.

To help them to do this all the resources of the sacraments, prayer and devotion of the Church will be needed, for such quests involve a real dereliction of spirit so that a man risks even the loss of faith itself. But is not this precisely what Christ Himself did, did He not offer not only His physical pain but that which He valued above all else—namely, his relation to His Father? 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?'

The Church needs a new influx of the power of the Holy Spirit both to commit our wills wholly to Christ and His Church and to risk the death of faith so that modern man can be enabled to see Christ as the truth. Do we not need in the Church a new order for study and teaching, of men and women, lay and ordained, who are experts in various aspects of modern knowledge, especially scientific and technological, and who are wholly committed to Christ?

Such an order by its teaching, preaching, broadcasting and every other possible means might help to build a bridge to the place where modern man stands, so that our contemporaries can with integrity and honesty cross that bridge to the point where they can again see Christ as He is, the Incarnation of the One who is the Truth. No task is more urgent unless we are to allow Christ not to be heard and seen because we shroud Him in obscurity.

THE JEWISH BACKGROUND OF THE INCARNATION

By the Rev. James Parkes, M.A., D.Phil.

In a famous verse in his letter to the *Galatians* (iv, 4), St. Paul proclaims that 'when the fulness of time came, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the Law'. Our purpose in the present lecture is not primarily to enquire what St. Paul meant, although at a later stage the New Testament conception of this fulness will be discussed, but to see what, with our hindsight, it means that Jesus was born just at that time and place. We are, therefore, trying to understand what at that time could be known only to God—in what way the moment had come for the revelation of God in the Incarnation, with its culmination in the Crucifixion and Resurrection.

It is tempting, in view of the unique nature of the event and of its universal and cosmic significance, to interpret 'fulness' in the sense of climax or completeness, whether it be a zenith or a nadir which has been reached. This is, in fact, how New Testament writers tended to think of it, and successive generations of scholars have agreed with them. Both also have preferred the idea of nadir to that of zenith. Viewing the five hundred years which preceded his coming as one of decline, in which a Remnant only was faithful, they have seen in the life and death of Jesus of Nazareth the last desperate attempt of God to save a world otherwise irretrievably sunk in sin. A very recent scholar has expressed this idea succinctly by describing the cross in the words 'Christ was the Remnant of Israel in himself'.[1] Now this is splendid melodrama, but it is really nonsense as history, and it is in consequence very poor theology.

If it was genuinely into this world that Jesus of Nazareth came, then he came into a world in which there has never been a total colouring of either black or white. Though the divine values may be absolute, the human setting is always relative. The moving loneliness and isolation of Christ upon the cross is an historical event whose theological significance belongs to the whole history of a free creation. It is not the temporary but

[1] G. A. F. Knight, *A Christian Theology of the Old Testament*. S.C.M. Press, 1959, p. 350.

cumulative effect of a progressive infidelity of the Jewish people. Moreover the doctrine of a Remnant is completely inapplicable to the religious situation in which Jesus was born, a point of capital importance in considering the meaning of 'the fulness of time'.

There have indeed been periods of the world's history when the torch of the divine purpose and its human response has been carried only by a small group in opposition to the *Zeitgeist* of the majority. Such was the situation described by Isaiah, in chs. viii, 16ff. and xx, 20ff. But it is an unusual phenomena and always a temporary one. A similar period would seem to have been justly described by Elijah when he complained that 'I, I only, am left, and they seek my life to take it away'. Elijah, at any rate, thought of himself as a faithful Remnant; but the divine reply warns us to treat the evidence more carefully—I have *'seven thousand* in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him' (I *Kings* xix, 10 and 18). There is no evidence in the period under consideration that there was a group withdrawn from the nation in whom alone the prophetic succession rested, nor is there evidence of that universal apostasy which alone could justify a statement that Jesus was the faithful Remnant in himself. The fulness of time, then, cannot be interpreted in terms of the total dereliction of Israel, and its total abandonment of the divine call.

It would be equally untrue to go to the other extreme, and proclaim the kind of golden age which we find in the famous Fourth Eclogue of Virgil and which haunts the fringes of classical and Semitic thought. The glorious opening of the Fourth Eclogue, with its reference to a virgin and a divine child, may, in the opinion of Dante and the medieval Church, have taken Virgil into heaven, but it certainly did not bring him down to earth! With the birth of Jesus it was not true that,

toto surget gens aurea mundo!

If we reject both zenith and nadir, it does not mean that the times and environment of Jesus were just like any other time, so that it would have been equally appropriate for him to have been born a few centuries earlier or later; or to have found a mother in the mountains of Khorasan or in the frozen marshes of Alaska. But the times were 'normal' only in the sense that they formed an integral, and therefore normal, part of the unfolding human story. And the Jews among whom he was born were normal, only in the sense that they were an integral part of the whole human family. For it is something much more subtle and elusive which is conveyed by the words 'the fulness of time' even if this was not exactly what was in the mind of St. Paul.

It means that in the divine plan and in the purpose of God, the times were totally appropriate to the event. What is implied by that phrase can be made clear by an illustration outside my subject, and whose significance

certainly was unknown to Paul and his contemporaries. During the vital centuries in which the Gospel was to spread and root, it was possible to travel from Jerusalem to the Atlantic by both the northern and the southern shores of the Mediterranean, and to penetrate to the North and Black Seas, with one language and currency, along a road more passable in winter and summer, and more efficiently policed, than was to be the case for fifteen hundred years after the Roman empire fell. So far as political conditions are concerned, such ease of travel has never been possible again.

Moreover, to travel eastwards was at that time almost as easy. There were merchant routes from the Mediterranean into central Asia, India and China which had not been made partially or totally impassable by the intolerance of another religion, or by the desolation bequeathed by successive hordes of invaders, Turk, Mongol or other, from the vast Asiatic steppe-land. These were the conditions under which the first generation of Christians could conceive their mandate to be 'to go and make disciples of all nations' (*Matt.* xxviii, 19) in a way in which succeeding centuries would with difficulty have thought of themselves as possessing a world-wide and universal message which required neither the fences of Judaism nor the sword of Muhammad.

If it were outside Paul's mind that communications from Jerusalem were then, and for some centuries after, such as they have not been before or since, it was certainly in accordance with his mind that we were surveying the world from Jerusalem. For the first appropriate point is that Jesus was born a Jew, born, as Paul puts it, 'under the Law'. We are so accustomed to thinking of Judaism as a closed religion, and of Jews as a people apart, that we cannot easily reconstruct in our minds the picture as it was two thousand years ago. Once we believe in a God who works in actual history, then we can see that the obvious place for the revelations of Sinai and the Incarnation was the strip of land where three continents join, and through which the streams of cultural interchange must continually flow from north, south, east and west. We know how Christianity spread in all directions from that centre; but we forget that it was human action, and not Jewish intention, which prevented a similar spread of Judaism. For the faith offered by the Jews in their wide dispersion was for two centuries a dangerous rival to Christianity. When the Church of the fourth century used the might of Roman law to put to death a Jew who sought to make converts, and the convert himself, we must realise that, though it was the wrong solution, it was an attempt to deal with a real problem. And Islam followed Christendom in making it impossible for Jews to mingle on a footing of equality with the rest of their environment. It was only in the nineteenth century that the barriers were lowered in the West; and in Islam they still exist—an issue quite independent of the Arab attitude to the state of Israel. But all this is of human history, not of divine planning.

In the time of Christ the picture was different. Jewish settlements were scattered already from the Atlantic to the Persian Gulf and beyond. We get a thumb-nail sketch of their dispersion from *Acts* ii, 5-11 describing those who heard the first apostolic message. What is more important is that almost every chapter of *Acts* presents a picture of the intimate relations of these Jewish communities with their Gentile neighbours, and of the influence upon the latter of the religion and worship of the synagogue. A lot of nonsense is talked about the need to free itself from the trammels of Judaism which confronted the earliest Church, for it was from no ghetto world that the first Christian message was preached to Greeks and Romans. The apostles came from a community to which Greeks and Romans were accustomed to look for the proclamation of ethical monotheism, and the worship of the one universal God. For the services of the synagogue were open to all. We do not know why or when the services of the synagogue became open to all who wished to attend; but it is evident that this openness was part of that fulness of time on which the Church was built.

To say this is not to ignore the particular character of Judaism, or to imply that the Incarnation had no further purpose than either the establishment of another Jewish sect, or the growth of new developments which could easily be accepted within the existing Jewish framework. That would be far from the truth; but it is also true that the Jewish communities of apostolic and sub-apostolic times provided the bases from which the apostolic message was preached; and that without them the Church would have had a much more difficult task of interpretation and explanation to the Hellenistic and Asiatic worlds.

The Jewish world in which Christianity was born, and from which it moved out, was primarily the creation of the reforms initiated by Ezra and his companions on their return from the rich plains of Babylon to the stony hills of Judea. The renewal and reformulation of the ancient covenant relationship between the God and people of Israel was indeed the work of a returning remnant. The phrase is appropriate because in the homeland and among the majority the religion of Israel had seriously deteriorated. The source of the new religious spirit infused into the people by Ezra was the acknowledgement that the sufferings and exile of the nation had been the proper consequence of its own sins. He set out with them to provide a basis for future loyalty to Jahweh, by the continuous education of the whole people in the nature and practice of their religion.

By its very nature the work of the teachers trained by Ezra and his successors could not be as dramatic as the great proclamations of the prophets. There is a limit to the value of even the noblest generalisations and the most exalted appeals. We are realising this today, when we look back with regret to the great emotional preachers of the nineteenth century, the Spurgeons, the Robertsons and their contemporaries. In their

time they were central; but today the emotional appeal is peripheral to the Church's work. We see it in the much advertised missions of Billy Graham, or the still more expensively placed advertisements of Moral Rearmament. There was a reason why Jesus could not come on the heels of the great proclamations of Isaiah or Jeremiah, and that reason is seen in the work of these anonymous teachers, whose activities do not even appear in the Scriptures. It was they and not the prophets who produced a situation where Jesus, growing up in an obscure Galilean village, was taught in its school, worshipped in its synagogue, knew and could read the Scriptures; just as it was they who had sifted and edited the Scriptures which he read. We easily fail to recognise the immense work which, in less than half a millenium, had produced, not merely in the land of Israel itself but all through the Jewish dispersion, a whole people understanding and practising a coherent religion, with identifiable teaching and ceremonies, a people able to listen to, and to understand, the teaching of Jesus himself and his apostles. It would be fascinating to know what was the organisation, what were the mutual relations, which had produced this situation, for which the previous history of human religion offers, I believe, no precedent.

To say that the divine preparations were complete, and that the appropriate moment had arrived, is, unhappily, not synonymous with a statement that the human beings involved appreciated and accepted all that was available. In particular, I find it quite impossible to believe that the relations which developed even in the apostolic period between Judaism and Christianity, or between Jews and Gentile Christians, were what God had intended. Even in the New Testament itself we find statements and judgements which we know not to have been true, as well as others which lent themselves to immediate and violent misunderstanding. Paul himself, in some of his vehemence, is not innocent of creating such misunderstandings. Remarks which he made in discussing ritual as the basis for Gentile entry into the Church were interpreted by Gentile Christians as verdicts passed on Judaism as practised by Jews. A false opposition was created between 'law' and 'grace', so that the author of the fourth Gospel could write 'the law was given through Moses, grace and truth came through Jesus Christ' (i, 17). The appalling evil which has been wrought by the patristic development of an attitude to Judaism which rests on the New Testament is today widely recognized. Whatever be the source of the secular forms which it now takes, the ultimate responsibility for antisemitism lies on the Church.

The antithesis between law and grace produced deplorable results in many fields, but especially in the field in which, even within Christendom, law must be applied. Part of the preparation for the Incarnation had been the enormous development of interpretation which had taken place between the times of Ezra and those of Jesus. In the time of the

Maccabees the conservative element had tried to call a halt to the process, and had brought into existence the conservative Sadducees. They were loyal to what was actually written in the Scriptures, but rejected the idea of the radicals, who formed the movement of the Pharisees, that interpretation was a continuous and continuing process. The Pharisees were right, for a serious and thought out doctrine of interpretation is the only way in which a written text of Scripture can remain the basis for a living and developing religion; and in which written laws which claim a divine sanction can be justly and humanely applied in actual court practice. It is not necessarily to agree with all the interpretations which Pharisaic and rabbinic Judaism adopted, to say that the Church backed the wrong horse in condemning 'the traditions of men' and identifying them with modifications of the text of Scripture. The witch-trials of the seventeenth century would have seemed a sufficiently dreadful example of this Sadducaism, were we not witnessing an equally deplorable application of Sadducaic doctrine in the attitude to Apartheid of many ordinary members of the Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa. A Christian policy may be difficult to define in the actual situation of South Africa. But the verdict on Ham at the moment when his father made the first tentative experiments with fermented liquor 'has nothing to do with the case'!

This combination of divine provision and human misunderstanding is well in evidence in considering the interpretation of the closing events of the life of Christ. And here the question is of quite fundamental importance. The whole New Testament considers that the life and death of Jesus of Nazareth as Messiah conformed to an already predicted pattern of the events which should close this age of creation. They were eschatological, in all the interpretations of the word *eschatos*. They were final in the sense of being the final revelation of God; and they were final in that they ushered in the closing events of creation. There was no more for God to say; there was no more for history to record. What remained between the actual disappearance of Jesus from the sight of the apostles and the dramatic events which should usher in his return was but a short pause given for repentance, an 'interim'.

This interpretation of the event has been prominent in all contemporary scholarship. It was, indeed, the traditional attitude of Christian creed and doctrine, although it sank into the background during a good many periods of the Church's history. What brought it back into prominence was the quest, opened by the refinement of the critical approach in 19th-century Protestantism, for what had actually happened during the life of Jesus, as distinct from what the early Church recorded; and, secondly, the extended discovery of further documents to which the general name of 'apocalyptic eschatology' was given, and the realisation of the extent of eschatological interest in the immediately preceding centuries. The net result of these two lines of approach has been that the New Testament

scholar, when confronted with such words as 'The Jewish Setting of the Incarnation' thinks immediately of eschatology and of the literature of pseudepigraphical apocalyptic.

What I would submit here is that the whole life and death of Jesus of Nazareth was seminal and not eschatal. It was the opening of a new period of the world's history, not the closing of one which had previously existed; and it was unprecedented and unexpected, so that it was only in its bare fact, or in the most superficial and unimportant details that any prophet had predicted its occurence. On the other hand its novelty grew out of what had already happened, and did not supersede it. When the author of the *Epistle to the Hebrews* writes of Sinai and the Atonement that Jesus 'abolishes the first in order to establish the second', he is giving a wrong interpretation of the relationship between those two events.

Such a statement must inevitably first explain why it is that New Testament writers find in messianic prediction and in apocalyptic speculation their explanation of the events which they had witnessed. For it is undeniable that they do so, and that eschatological references exist in all the Gospel accounts of the *ipsissima verba* of Christ himself. I believe that such an explanation can be convincingly offered; and the fact that their writings became endowed with the character of verbally inspired Scriptures some two or three generations later adequately explains why the apostolic exposition has never been challenged. Sensitive Christians all through the ages must have puzzled over the contrast between the extreme depth and tenderness of the words 'Truly I say unto you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me' and the slap-dash superficiality with which whole nations are told to 'depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels'. But it is only with the freedom of modern scholarship that we can absolutely refuse to believe that the second quotation is from the lips of Jesus. Previously those who most widely diverged from orthodoxy had to accept that the ultimate division of mankind into sheep and goats was a firm belief of Jesus himself. In the same way it was his own interpretation of his mission that it should culminate in a dramatic return 'on the clouds of heaven' to divide mankind into the saved and the damned and so usher in a celestial messianic kingdom 'which should have no end'.

If we are to deny the authenticity of this picture it can be only because we can offer a convincing explanation of how it arose, and how it came to dominate one aspect of the New Testament record. This is fortunately possible. For the denial that Jesus himself was the source of the eschatology of the New Testament has been made much easier by the evidence offered by R. H. Charles and others that there is available an effective alternative source in the outpourings of apocalyptic. All the picture and

much of the actual language is already there. Nor is it difficult to see how it came to be applied to the Incarnation.

From the earliest days the apostles were involved in argument as to whether Jesus was a deceiver or not. This could only be an argument on the lines of the question asked by the disciples of John: 'Are you he who is to come, or shall we look for another?' (*Matt.* xi, 3). To the contemporaries of Jesus this question could properly be expressed in the alternative phrase: 'Are you the Messiah?', and they were convinced that they knew the kind of person the Messiah was to be. There was, therefore, a continual attempt to fit the life and career of Jesus into the framework of existent messianic prophecy. It was in no sense insincere. Jesus *was,* in their deepest conviction, 'the Christ of God' (*Luke* ix, 20), and, on the other hand, the Scriptures were the word of that same God. The one must, therefore, be interpretable in terms of the other. In so far as there was too glaring an incompatibility, we find already in Peter's second speech (*Acts* iii, 20) the solution that Jesus would return almost immediately in order to fulfil those parts of his predicted role which he could not fulfil in the life already lived. In promising them 'the Christ appointed for you, Jesus, whom the heavens must receive until the time for establishing all that God spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets of old' Peter makes the whole picture clear. Jesus *must* fulfil a role already determined for him.

If we take a wider view of the material in the Old Testament than that which was specifically recognised as 'messianic', then we can say that there was a widespread expectation—or rather conviction—that God had more to say and do than he had already said and done at Sinai and in the history thus far accomplished. It was expressed in many ways, and the expressions cover many centuries. There is an underlying belief that God would bring his world to a perfection in which his will would be triumphant. This was expressed in a belief in the messianic age of righteousness, to which sometimes a messianic king was added. As the moral sense of the spiritual leaders of Israel deepened, it was realised that this expectation could not be easily or lightly fulfilled. It would mean suffering and catastrophe, because of the universality and depth of human sin and failure. The 'day of the Lord' would, as Amos saw, bring darkness and not light. Such an understanding opened the way to new depths of illumination. Jeremiah saw that it would mean a new covenant in the hearts of men; but the anonymous author of the Servant poems went even deeper: they were realistic about human failure: the world could only be set right by something other than all men becoming good. It would need someone vicariously to accept and redeem the sufferings and punishments which others had deserved. The thought of the unknown poet was not just a lone voice. For, simultaneously with his work,

changes were taking place in the conception of the meaning of the sacrifices offered in the Temple at Jerusalem, and the idea of an annual Day of Atonement was taking root. There is an underlying conviction of the sinfulness of man and the holiness of God which Ezekiel struggled to express and which, I believe, ultimately drove him mad.

All this was in the line of the true development of the religion of Israel. But there was inevitably a cheaper version for popular consumption, the idea that God would solve all human problems by the employment of violent methods which, in his dealings with his creation, he had thus far scrupulously avoided. It was the line of apocalyptic eschatology. In it there is little of the depth of feeling which made Jeremiah believe in the ultimate redemption of Israel, little of his exquisite poem:

> I have loved you with an everlasting love;
> therefore I have continued my faithfulness towards you.
> Again I will build you and you shall be built,
> O virgin Israel (*Jer.* xxxi, 3 f).

The God of Apocalyptic has none of the patience and moral grandeur of the God of lawgiver and prophet. He is represented as hasty, bombastic, and unscrupulous. His main interest is violent and painful punishment for everybody whom the apocalyptist dislikes. It is a detestable literature, even though occasionally it reaches great heights, or gives birth to exquisite sentiments such as are to be found in a few verses of the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*. I have been deliberately categoric and uncompromising about it because I believe that there is an absolute *entweder-oder* involved. We cannot accept bits of it. We either totally accept the idea that apocalyptic contains the true background of the Incarnation and is rightly found in all the Gospels, or we reject it equally absolutely. I reject it, but I do not thereby reject the idea that there is a full and immediate Jewish setting to the Incarnation. But I look for that setting in other aspects of the Jewish picture.

The attitude of expectation which was described in the preceding paragraphs created the atmosphere in which God could act—it was part of the fulness of time. But God is not limited by our expectation of what the character of his action should be. The only limitation is our ability to understand and to interpret what he does. The interpretation of apocalyptic eschatology was the wrong one. But the alternative was equally available in other forms and expressions of Judaism. The fulness of time is still a true description of the situation.

The first part of the public mission of Jesus was occupied with teaching and healing. Neither were roles ascribed by apocalyptic to the Messiah. But both existed in the life of the Jewish people, although the Old Testament is almost silent about both. Yet the ministry of teaching is proved by the existence of the audiences to which Jesus and the early Church

spoke, and the ministry of healing by a few stories from the prophets and by the question of Jesus: 'But if I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast them out?' (*Matt.* xii, 27). For these activities, then, the time was ripe.

For the next stage we shall turn not only to prophet and priest, but to the evidence already referred to which redeems the *Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs*. It is evidence of the deepening of what was already in existence in terms of an intimacy of divine-human and human-human relationship. We find it in several places. Jeremiah had spoken of a covenant written anew in the hearts of men. The author of *Hebrews* had interpreted this as a different covenant, saying categorically that Christ 'abolishes the first in order to establish the second' (x, 9); but this is in stark opposition to the words of Jesus himself that he came not to abolish, but to bring to its fulfilment, what God had already done. In the *Testament of Dan* (v, 3) the two great commandments are joined—for the first time, in the literature which has survived; and one consequence has been an immense deepening of the ideas of mutual love and forgiveness between men.

Closely linked to this sense of unity of man with man, and man with God are three other examples of the growth towards the fulness of time. There are the familiar Servant poems, with their insistence on the vicarious nature of the Servant's suffering, a vicariousness which is only effective if we think of all as being members of one body. Together with the single outpouring of a supreme poet is the corporate and official development of the Day of Atonement, offering parallels which are movingly used in the *Epistle to the Hebrews*. There is no question of the deepening of the sense of sin, individual and corporate, which expresses itself through all the later centuries of Old Testament and inter-testamental development. In *Ezekiel* it is repeated with an almost fanatical violence. In the official ritual of the Day of Atonement it was expressed deeply, but with the immense limitation of the involuntary suffering of the animal sacrificed. But it would be wrong to assume that this was as far as human thought had got before the example of the Cross. For the Maccabean rising offers the first example of the spectacle of ordinary human beings voluntarily offering themselves as martyrs for their faith; and out of their martyrdom grows the belief, expressed later in describing the death of the aged priest, Eleazar, that the martyr's death makes atonement for the sins of his people (his death is described in II *Macc.* vi, 18-31, the description of his death being an atonement comes to us only in a document later than the Incarnation (IV *Macc.* v, 16).

The whole of this development is crowned by two great Pauline doctrines. All through the Bible there is that strange sense of a corporate presence which is essentially Semitic, and difficult to appreciate for the mind trained in Greek thought. It comes in the Passover service where

still today a Jew identifies himself with the actual generation which witnessed the theophany of Sinai. It runs all through the *Psalms* with their quick changes from 'I' to 'we', and from future to present and past. It underlies the Servant Poems with their identification now national, now individual, and now both without definition. In Paul it reaches its apogee in the doctrine of the Incarnation continuing in the living body of his followers, which is truly the living body of Christ. The roots of this doctrine were there in the thought of the time, so that Paul could see a single individual life transformed into a continuing dynamic for all succeeding generations, new, and yet created (as another writer of the New Testament says) by 'the lamb slain from the foundations of the world' (*Rev.* xiii, 8).

The second great Pauline image which crowns the fulness of time is of the Cross as the messianic throne. In the very earliest days the apostles, filled with the sense of a manifest Messiah, had put forward the idea that Jesus would return again to behave with true messianic dignity. Paul himself had begun (if II *Thessalonians* really be from his pen) with pompous visions of vengeance, blood and fire in the worst spirit of the apocalyptists; but nothing is more dramatic in the developing thought of the apostle than the change to a conception that the messianic task of Jesus of Nazareth has already been completed, and that his messianic presence is already with us. Not meaningless gambollings in the sky, but the blood of the Cross is the final symbol of the divine-human relationship, the final crown of the divine victory over all the failures of creation.

Paul and the author of the *Epistle to the Hebrews* stand together on this supreme height. For the latter, Jesus is the great high priest 'after the order of Melchisedek' who by a single voluntary action makes atonement for his people. Paul does not use the actual language of the Day of Atonement, but uses even more boldly language which speaks of Jesus, not only as the high priest offering sacrifice, but as the sacrifice itself. What is especially significant in all this is that, on the one hand, it is totally Jewish, and, on the other, it conforms to no picture of the expected activities of the Messiah. Moreover by the combination of the belief in an action once performed with belief in a continuing body performing it, Paul emphasises that the Incarnation is seminal and not eschatal. And so it brings us to the final question: Was, then, Jesus the Messiah, if he fulfilled a completely different role?

In one way the answer to the question in those words is: 'No'; but by itself the answer would be misleading, for if the question be asked in the form 'Art thou he that cometh?', then the answer is an unhesitating 'Yes'. But there is value in asking the original question. For the answer really is 'No' to the main line of messianic expectation, in so far as it was concerned with the person of an individual messiah. God never had planned to send the king or other person, human or superhuman, which

prophet and apocalyptist had expected. The human conqueror or lawgiver, and the semi-divine judge, were alike false ideas. But that is not the whole answer. The Church, in taking over the personal messianic expectation from its Jewish background, created a dual problem. One we have already seen: the perpetual attempt to bend the life and death of Jesus into a predetermined mould which, in fact, it did not fit. We are still suffering from the eschatology forced into the New Testament. The other effect has been equally serious.

From a Jewish point of view the person of a messiah was always secondary to the conception of a messianic age. As thought about that age developed, the person of the messiah became so secondary that some visionaries omitted him altogether, and some saw two or more who would bear the title of messiah. At the best his task was to lead the nation back to the Promised Land. But the belief in a messianic age remained quite universal and fundamental to Jewish thought; whereas the Christian tradition has constantly ignored it. We are today only just beginning to come out of the theological nightmare in which the word 'progress' was 'a dirty word'. It is not too much to say that Jews and Judaism have survived because of the ineradicable Jewish belief that in the end, somehow, and by means in which the human contribution will be part, God will bring his creation to the fulfilment of his plan for it. I have spoken earlier of that which was ready in the divine preparation, but which was not taken up by the human agents. This is the last and most tragic example of that failure. Because the world did not immediately change with the coming of Jesus of Nazareth, the Church has wavered. At times she has even abandoned her belief that the victory of the Cross is truly, as the Anglican prayer of consecration at the communion service puts it, the assurance of 'the satisfaction for the sins of the whole world'. For she has been pessimistic about the power of God to redeem more than a fragment of his creation.

There can be no question but that this pessimism stems from the effects of regarding the Incarnation as the closing drama of creation, instead of seeing in it the coming into this world of a new start, of a release of new power, and of the birth, in the Church, of a new instrument of divine-human co-operation. And all this was without destroying the power that was already there; it was the abolition of nothing but of the false expectations of apocalyptic; it grew from roots deeply spread within the field of Judaism and Jewish history; in a hundred subtle and yet definable ways it was truly and necessarily a coming in the 'fulness of time'.

THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS

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The particular scrolls which are to be discussed in this paper are the manuscripts which have been discovered in 1947 and the following years in caves in and around the Wadi Qumran, north-west of the Dead Sea. These manuscripts represent what survives of over 500 books—some of them in a tolerably good state of preservation but the great majority in a sadly fragmentary condition.

Their relevance to the general theme of this conference—'Jesus Christ: His World and Ours'—lies in the fact that they belong to the last two centuries or so of the Second Jewish Commonwealth, and that they introduce us to the life and thought of an interesting body of pious Jews in that period. I see no reason to doubt the widely accepted view that they belonged to the library of a religious community which had its headquarters at Khirbet Qumran, a ruined building in the neighbourhood of the caves where the manuscripts were found. We cannot, of course, assume without more ado that every book in the library of a religious community will shed light on the beliefs and practices of that community; but many of the non-biblical documents from Qumran bear such a measure of self-consistent testimony to a system of Jewish belief and practice distinct from that of the main streams of Judaism that they can reasonably be used, with all proper caution and with the aid of other literary and archaeological evidence, to reconstruct the outlook and fortunes of the Qumran community.

We are to look, then, first at the origin and character of this community, and then at some aspects of its relation to Christianity.

1. *Origin and Character of the Qumran Community*

It seems highly probable that the Qumran community originated among the *hasidim* of the second century B.C.—more particularly among those *hasidim* who, for all their horror at the attempt made by Antiochus Epiphanes to stamp out the Jewish nation's religious identity, could not feel happy about the methods and aims of the Hasmonean resistance to him. To them, in the words of Daniel xi. 34, the Hasmonean action was at best 'a little help'. In I Maccabees ii, 29 ff, we read of a large number of pious Jews who tried to escape the attention of the king's officers by living in hiding-places in the wilderness. They were discovered there, and offered their lives if they would come out of their caves and submit to the king. But it was the sabbath day, and they remembered the divine law: 'remain every man of you in his place; let no man go out of his place on the seventh day' (Exodus xvi, 29). So they stayed where they were, and were all put to the sword, offering no resistance to their assailants,

because it was the day of rest. It is among people of that spirit—the *maskilim* of the book of Daniel, I believe—that we are to look for the ancestors of our community.

Even when the Hasmoneans were successful in gaining first the restoration of religious liberty and, later, political independence, these men were not greatly impressed. This was not the bringing in of everlasting righteousness which they had been taught to expect at the end of their tribulation. But precisely where they were to look for the guidance that they needed was not clear, until at length, in the words of the Zadokite work, 'God raised up for them a "teacher of righteousness" [that is, a right and reliable guide] to lead them in the way of His heart and to make known to the last generations what He would do in the last generation.'

This teacher must have been a man of remarkable personal qualities, an organizer and leader of men as well as an original thinker and independent interpreter of the prophetic writings. Under his direction many of his followers went out into the wilderness of Judaea, to live there as a closely knit society of 'volunteers for holiness', dedicated to the study and practice of the law of God. By such study and practice, they believed, they would become a people prepared for the Lord, well equipped to be His chosen and effective instrument when the time came for Him to act decisively in the world. Biblical authority for their withdrawal to the wilderness was found in the words of Isaiah xl, 3:

> In the wilderness prepare the way of Yahweh;
> Make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

They had sympathizers and well-wishers in the towns and villages of Judaea, who did not feel called upon to enter into the full rigour of the community life in the wilderness. Many of these would have had family ties which kept them back. But those who went out to the wilderness submitted, after a searching probationary period, to a strenuous and lifelong discipline, the details of which may be read in the *Rule of the Community*.

It seems certain to me that these people are to be identified with the Essenes, or at least with one Essene group which may have had features distinguishing it from other Essene groups. If that be so, then the Qumran literature must take precedence over the accounts of Philo, Pliny, Josephus and Hippolytus as sources for our knowledge of the Essenes. But for the present it may be better to avoid calling them Essenes and refer to them as the men of Qumran, or the Qumran community.

There were other *hasidim* in those days who developed into the party of the Pharisees. Readers of the New Testament think of the Pharisees as the strictest sect of Judaism, but the men of Qumran despised the Pharisees for choosing an easy way compared with their own. To them the Pharisees appeared to be 'seekers after smooth things' (like the people in

Isaiah xxx, 10, who asked the prophets to speak 'smooth things' to them), and it is probably one of the early Pharisaic leaders who is denounced in Qumran literature as a 'Prophet of Falsehood'.

The men of Qumran did not recognize the Hasmonean high priests as entitled to occupy that sacred office. The one legitimate high-priestly family in their eyes was the house of Zadok, which had been deposed by Antiochus Epiphanes. So long as an illegitimate high-priesthood dominated the Jerusalem temple, they could take no part in the sacrificial cult there; for the time being, they believed, the praises of their lips were a sufficiently acceptable offering to God. But they looked forward to the day when a worthy priesthood of Zadokite stock would once again offer up acceptable sacrifices to God in a purified temple, and in their community they preserved the cadres of priests and Levites intact, as far as they could, so that there would be no delay in resuming the true order of worship when the appointed time came.

The Hasmonean rulers, who took active steps against the Pharisaic opposition, did not leave the Qumran community unmolested. One of these rulers receives dishonourable mention in the Qumran literature as the 'Wicked Priest'. (Even if each Hasmonean high priest, because of his illegal tenure of that dignity, was looked upon by the community as a 'Wicked Priest' *ex officio,* it is quite clear that one member of the dynasty was thought of as the Wicked Priest *de facto* as well as *de jure*. Similarly, even if each successive leader of the community was called the Teacher of Righteousness, as some have suggested, it is clear that the community's effective founder was the Teacher of Righteousness *par excellence*.) The Wicked Priest has not yet been identified with unanimity. The two Hasmoneans whose claims have been most persuasively pressed are Jonathan (who exercised chief power from 160 to 143 B.C.), and Alexander Jannaeus (king and high priest from 103 to 76 B.C.). Whoever he was, the Wicked Priest persecuted the Teacher of Righteousness, and he is specially reprobated for having on one occasion attacked the Teacher when the latter and his followers were observing the day of atonement. The fact that the Wicked Priest was free to indulge in such activity on that day (when one might have expected him to be officiating in the temple) suggests what is probable on other grounds—that the Qumran community did not accept the calendar by which the sacred year was regulated in the temple services, but followed a different reckoning, probably the calendar prescribed in the book of Jubilees.

The iniquities of the Wicked Priest and his associates, the community believed, would one day receive condign punishment from God. As time went on, they came to recognize more and more clearly the means which God would use to punish these guilty men. He would raise up the 'Kittim' for this purpose—and 'Kittim', in the Qumran literature as in the book of Daniel, probably means the Romans. (It is only right to point

out that others, outstandingly Professor H. H. Rowley, have argued powerfully for their identification with the Seleucids.) It is, of course, a matter of historical fact that it was the Romans who put an end to Hasmonean domination in Judaea; but the men of Qumran could see the shape of things to come even before the Roman occupation of 63 B.C. But they also saw that the 'Kittim', even if they were the instruments of divine judgment against the apostate priesthood of Jerusalem, would incur that judgment in their own turn because of their impiety and rapacity. And who would be the instrument of divine judgment against the 'Kittim'? Who but the righteous remnant in Israel? For 'God will not destroy His people by the hand of the nations, but into the hand of His elect will God commit the judgment of all nations'. So says the Qumran commentator on Habakkuk. And just how the elect of God would execute His judgment against all nations, and first and foremost against the 'Kittim', is described in detail in that astonishing document which bears the title *The Rule of War*.

Pre-eminent among the elect of God were the men of Qumran themselves. The task to which they dedicated themselves in their wilderness retreat was no light or ignoble one. During the period when wickedness was dominant, the 'epoch of Belial', they could only expect their devotion to the will of God to bring them suffering, but they accepted this suffering as something which would not only secure their own acceptance by God but also effect propitiation for the land of Israel as a whole. This propitiatory work was a responsibility which lay upon the whole community, but in a special degree upon a group of fifteen men, twelve laymen and three priests, who are mentioned in the *Rule of the Community*. These fifteen are commonly, though doubtfully, described as an inner council; an alternative suggestion is that recently made by Father E. F. Sutcliffe in *The Monks of Qumran*, that they were the nucleus with which the Teacher of Righteousness made a beginning when he founded his wilderness community. There is a further place in the *Rule of the Community* which appears to look forward to the time when one man will be blessed with a special endowment of the Spirit of God for the exercise of a purifying and teaching ministry—possibly an eschatological figure envisaged in terms of the Isaianic Servant of Yahweh. However that may be, there is adequate evidence to show that the community looked upon its corporate vocation as the fulfilment of the Servant's rôle.

But the day would come when the epoch of Belial would be brought to an end, and then the community would be called to take the lead in executing God's judgment against the Gentile oppressors of His people and also against those leaders in Israel who deliberately led their fellow-countrymen astray. In this regard we may say that they envisaged their vocation as the fulfilment of the rôle of the 'one like a son of man' in Daniel's vision, who receives dominion and judgment from the Ancient

of Days. When Daniel asks the interpreting angel to explain his vision, he is told that 'the kingdom and the dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High' (Daniel vii, 27). 'The saints of the Most High'—this was exactly what the men of Qumran considered themselves to be; it is one of the designations which they give themselves in their literature.

Other designations which they give themselves make it quite plain that they regarded themselves as the righteous remnant, the true Israel of God. They appear as the saints of the covenant, the poor of the flock, the sons of light, the men of truth, the sons of Zadok, the community of Israel and Aaron ('Israel' and 'Aaron' standing for their lay and priestly members respectively).

Thanks to the instruction received from the Teacher of Righteousness, they could read their God-given duty clearly in the prophetic scriptures. They believed themselves to have entered the last days, the days to which all the prophets pointed forward; and they eagerly awaited the signal which would herald the dawn of the new age, the signal which would at the same time call them to march to the help of the Lord against the mighty. The time of the end was longer in coming, indeed, than they had originally expected. Once, perhaps, they had hoped that it might come in the lifetime of the Teacher of Righteousness. But even after he had been 'gathered in', they continued to look forward with undiminished faith, reflecting that it was only appropriate that a forty years' probationary period should intervene between the Teacher's death and the final dénouement, just as Israel's history had begun with a probationary period of forty years in the wilderness.

The dénouement did not come in the form which they had been led to expect. The last stages of the history of the community are obscure; we should beware of accepting and repeating too uncritically what has come in some quarters to be established as the 'received' account. It could well be that before or during the war of A.D. 66-73 Khirbet Qumran was taken over as a stronghold by the Zealots, as has been suggested by J. M. Allegro in his book on the Copper Scroll. If that is so, we cannot be sure whether it would have been taken over with the community's approval or against its will. Traditionally we think of the Essenes and Zealots as diametrical opposites, but Hippolytus' account of the Essenes suggests a measure of overlapping between the two. On this, however, we need not speculate here, any more than we need speculate on a possible *rapprochement* after A.D. 70 between fugitive remnants of the Qumran community and the refugee Church of Jerusalem.

2. *Qumran and Christianity*

What we specially want to consider is the significance of the fact that the men of Qumran were pursuing their course in Judaea before and

during the ministry of John the Baptist and his followers, and of our Lord and His apostles. In particular, we have to compare and contrast them with the early Christian community.

The early Christians, like the men of Qumran, regarded themselves as the Israel of God, the righteous remnant, the little flock, the people of the new covenant. They took over titles given in the Old Testament to Israel as a whole: they are 'a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people' (I Peter ii, 9). They too believed themselves to be living in the days of the fulfilment of all that the prophets had spoken. 'Moses . . . and all the prophets who have spoken, from Samuel and those who came afterwards, also proclaimed these days.' These words of Peter, recorded in Acts iii, 22-24, would not surprise us if we met them in a Qumran context. Nor is there any doubt to whom Peter and his associates were indebted for this belief: the Gospels make it plain that this was what their Master taught. Jesus began His ministry in Galilee with the proclamation that the appointed time had fully come and the kingdom of God had drawn near (Mark i, 15)—words in which it is not difficult to detect an echo of the book of Daniel. We should bear in mind, however, that in His employment of apocalyptic categories as in everything else, Jesus touches nothing that He does not transform. Again, Luke tells us that when Jesus read the opening words of Isaiah lxi in the synagogue at Nazareth, as far as the announcement of 'the acceptable year of the Lord', He began His exposition of the text by saying: 'Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing' (Luke iv, 16-21). There can, I think, be little question that the main lines of Old Testament interpretation running throughout the New Testament were laid down by Jesus Himself.

The Qumran community believed that the prophets, by divine inspiration and command, foretold the things that were to happen at the end-time, but that one thing was withheld from them—the knowledge of *when* the end-time would come. Without this knowledge it was impossible to understand their oracles properly; they remained a mystery which awaited its true solution. But this knowledge was granted to the Teacher of Righteousness: he was given the key to unlock the divine mysteries, and the special knowledge which God revealed to him was communicated by him to his disciples. No wonder that in their *Hymns of Thanksgiving* they praised God for opening up to them His wonderful mysteries. For *they* understood things which remained a riddle to others. We recall our Lord's words to *His disciples*: 'To you has been given the secret of the kingdom of God, but for those outside everything is in parables [or "riddles"]' (Mark iv, 11). The prophets themselves, Peter assures us, did not fully understand the significance of their oracles; 'they inquired what person or time was indicated by the Spirit of Christ within them' (I Peter i, 11). But Peter and his fellow-Christians had no

need to inquire: they knew the person and they knew the time. 'This is that which was spoken by the prophet. . . . To him [that is, to Jesus] all the prophets bear witness' (Acts ii, 16; x, 43).

With regard to the interpretation of Old Testament prophecy, then, our Lord did for His followers what the Teacher of Righteousness did for his. But our Lord did more: in the belief of His followers He fulfilled the scriptures in addition to making their meaning plain; He not only disclosed the mystery of the kingdom of God but He came as the very embodiment of that kingdom—the *autobasileia,* as Origen put it. The Qumran interpretation of Old Testament prophecy certainly found references to the Teacher of Righteousness in the prophetic oracles, but did not present him as embodying the fulfilment of those oracles. The fulfilment lay ahead, in the new age, the coming restoration.

This new age, in Qumran thought, would be heralded by the appearance of three significant figures—a prophet, a priest and a prince. The priest and the prince are both called *meshihim*, 'anointed ones'; whether we speak of them as two Messiahs or not depends on our definition of the title Messiah. When Qumran literature speaks of 'the Messiah' in the singular, it is the prince that is meant. The prophet whom they expected was the prophet of whom Moses speaks in Deuteronomy xviii, 15 ff; he would, in effect, be a second Moses. The priest would be the head of the state in the new age; almost certainly he would belong to the Zadokite family. The prince, the Davidic Messiah, would be military leader and civil ruler, but he would be subordinate to the priest. As military leader he would command the sons of light in their war against the sons of darkness; his rôle as civil ruler would be that allotted to 'the prince' in the blueprint for the new commonwealth in the closing chapters of the book of Ezekiel. The Teacher of Righteousness who founded the community cannot well have been envisaged as identical with any of these three figures. There is indeed in the Zadokite work a reference which looks forward to the 'standing up of the Teacher of Righteousness in the latter days', but there is little justification for the view that this is the first Teacher of Righteousness rising from the dead to resume and complete his career. This future Teacher of Righteousness is more probably to be identified with the 'Expounder of the Law' who, according to another passage in the Zadokite work (corroborated by the document called 4Q *Florilegium*), is to rise up at the end-time along with the Davidic Messiah. Since 'the lips of a priest should guard knowledge, and men should seek *torah* from his mouth' (Malachi ii, 7), this coming 'Expounder of the Law' may best be equated with the great priest of the new age.

The formal correspondence between the messianic doctrine of Qumran and the Christian doctrine of our Lord's *triplex munus* will be patent to

us all. But with the formal correspondence there goes an important material difference. For in Christian theology our Lord is prophet and priest and king in his own person. From the earliest days of the apostolic preaching He was proclaimed as being both the Messiah of David's line and the prophet like unto Moses. As for His priestly office, this could not be presented in terms of the Levitical or Zadokite priesthood, because it was generally known that He belonged to the tribe of Judah. We need not take too seriously the attempts which have been made, from Hippolytus to our own day, to give Him a Levitical ancestry through His mother, who was related to Elizabeth, one of 'the daughters of Aaron' (Luke i, 5). The New Testament writer who makes it his chief business to develop the conception of our Lord's priestly office finds Old Testament precedent for this in the hundred and tenth psalm, where a Davidic king is acclaimed as 'a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek'.

In its messianic doctrine as in its general biblical interpretation, the Qumran community laid special stress on the prophetic parts of the Old Testament, in a way which aligns it with Christianity as against normative Judaism. In normative Judaism the prophets tend to be treated by way of commentary on the law; at Qumran, as in the early Church, they are allowed to speak in their own right, and the theology of the two movements is very closely bound up with their respective principles of prophetic interpretation.

The Qumran community, like other schools of Jewish thought at the time, did have its *halakhah*, its interpretation and application of the *torah*, and a very strict *halakhah* it was, stricter than that of the Pharisaic schools. We have only to look at the rulings on the marriage law or the sabbath law laid down in the Zadokite work to appreciate this. To give but one example: our Lord is reported as asking the Pharisees and lawyers of His acquaintance: 'Which of you, having an ass or an ox that has fallen into a well, will not immediately pull him out on a sabbath day?' (Luke xiv, 8; cf. Matthew xii, 11). But such a humane action as this is expressly forbidden in Qumran literature as a breach of the sabbath law. This may illustrate, too, how far removed in principle the Qumran *halakhah* was from the interpretation of the *torah* in the Gospels, where the main criterion is an appeal to the original intention of each institution or commandment.

The prophetic interpretation adopted at Qumran not only actualizes the prophetic oracles, as that of the early Christians also did, but follows an atomizing procedure which ignores the original life-setting of the oracles and their general context, and even overrides the plain grammatical connection between one clause and its neighbour. As Professor Dodd has shown us in *According to the Scriptures* (1952), the New Testament use of the Old Testament exhibits rather an appreciation of the divine pattern

of action which pervades the prophetic revelation, and finds that pattern most fully realized in the redemptive act of God in Christ.

Another line of comparison between Qumran and early Christianity has to do with the organization and discipline of the two movements. Here such resemblances as have been noted are of a general rather than an essential character. The Qumran community, like a number of other religious groups, had its purificatory washings, but these lack the distinctive once-for-all element which makes Christian baptism what it is. The Qumran community also had its communal meal, but if we are to suggest a New Testament counterpart for this, we shall find it in the *agape* and not in the Eucharist; the sacramental and memorial essence of the latter is not paralleled at Qumran. The *mebaqqer* or superintendent of one of the branches of the Qumran community has little in common with the Christian *episkopos* but the meaning of his title. Even so eschatologically minded a community as the primitive Church of Jerusalem did not organize itself in anything like the Qumran manner. The community of goods of which we read in the early chapters of Acts was a spontaneous move rather than a carefully planned and regulated provision, as it was at Qumran. And there is as much divergence as there is resemblance between the fine imposed at Qumran upon any member who deceived the community in the matter of wealth and the more serious fate which befell Ananias and Sapphira when they yielded to the like temptation. Correspondences in detailed points of organization and discipline cannot outweigh the fact that the men of Qumran hoped to preserve their holiness by keeping themselves to themselves as far as possible, whereas Jesus consorted with people of all sorts and conditions, and His followers inherited from Him a missionary enthusiasm which, even in its early restriction to 'the lost sheep of the house of Israel', has no Qumran counterpart.

There are many parts of the New Testament which have received fresh illumination from the Qumran discoveries; indeed, it would be difficult to think of any part of it which has received no illumination of some sort from them. These discoveries are sufficiently exciting without the sensational implications which some popularizers have read into them. Some people apparently *hope* that they will undermine Christianity; others, even more foolishly, *are afraid* that they will. More foolishly, I say, because the Christian who knows Whom he has believed can never regard any facts, whether of science or history, whether long known or recently discovered, as 'inconvenient' facts. He knows that all truth is God's truth, and therefore worthy to receive its warmest welcome from the followers of Him whom we believe to be Truth incarnate.

However, if these discoveries do not constitute, as the publisher's blurb on a certain American book tells us, 'the greatest challenge to Christian dogma since Darwin's theory of evolution'—a rare gem of wishful thinking!—they do add a valuable chapter to our knowledge of Judaism in the

closing years of the Second Commonwealth, and provide us with fresh and most welcome background material against which we can study the New Testament writings and the history of Christian origins with greater understanding.

Special attention has been directed (by Professor Albright and others) to the affinities in thought and language between the Qumran texts and the Johannine literature of the New Testament. We should perhaps take the precaution of reminding ourselves that practically every new discovery in Near Eastern religious history of the late pre-Christian and early Christian era has been hailed in its day as supplying the key to the problem of the Fourth Gospel. But the way in which truth and falsehood, light and darkness, and so forth, are opposed in the Qumran literature (for example, in the *Rule of the Community* and the *Rule of War*) is specially reminiscent of the language of the Johannine Gospel and Epistles, to the point where some have spoken of a common conceptual world. We should remember, of course, that the same opposition finds expression in other New Testament writings, especially those of Paul. This dualism, if we may call it so, is more determinist at Qumran than in the New Testament, where we see sons of darkness in considerable numbers quitting their former allegiance to be enrolled as sons of light: 'once you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord' (Ephesians v, 8). Such a transition from darkness to light may be envisaged in the Qumran literature as a theoretical possibility, but one gets the impression that any movement between the two realms is more likely to take the form of defection on the part of sons of light.

Even so, the dualism of Qumran is brought into subjection to the overruling sovereignty of one God, who forms light and creates darkness (cf. Isaiah xlv, 7). The prince of lights and the angel of darkness, who between them dominate the whole of mankind, are both creatures of the one God, together with all else that exists. 'From the God of knowledge', says the *Rule of the Community,* 'is everything that is and that is to be; even before they existed, He established all their design'.

The emphasis on knowledge in such a statement as this, an emphasis found in many of the community documents, has led some scholars to describe the Qumran doctrine as a form of Gnosticism. It really depends on our definition of Gnosticism whether we agree with this description (like Cullmann) or disagree (like Schoeps). But we look in vain throughout the Qumran literature for that form of *gnosis* which enables the soul to liberate itself progressively from its imprisonment in matter and to ascend through the spheres to the upper world of light. The knowledge cultivated at Qumran was that knowledge whose source is in the fear of God, special importance being attached to the knowledge of the mysteries of the divine purpose, to be unfolded in its fulness at the end of the present world-order.

The eschatological warfare, so prominent in Qumran thinking, appears in the New Testament also, but with a material difference. In Paul it is by His cross that Jesus vanquishes the hostile powers; in the Johannine literature—Gospel and Apocalypse alike—He whose name is called the Word of God overcomes the world by His faithfulness unto death, the conquering Lion of the tribe of Judah is the slaughtered Lamb.

If we look for a setting in which there could have been some contact between the Qumran milieu and the earlier stages of the Christian movement, we may find a clue in those earlier chapters of the Fourth Gospel which record a phase of our Lord's ministry which was concurrent with the later ministry of John the Baptist. The debate about purification mentioned in John iii, 25 is the kind of debate which must have been quite common in the Jordan valley and the Dead Sea region at a time when so many competing 'baptist' groups inhabited those parts. On this subject I may content myself at present with referring to an article entitled 'The Baptism of John and the Qumran Community' contributed by Dr. J. A. T. Robinson (now Bishop of Woolwich) to the *Harvard Theological Review* for July 1957.

When the first Qumran discoveries were made, chief interest was concentrated on their potential importance for the textual criticism of the Old Testament. While their importance in this respect remains great, it has become increasingly clear that their importance for New Testament origins is even greater. We render a disservice to the cause of historical research not only when we refuse to look evidence in the face for fear of its implications but also when we propound theories which outrun the available evidence and present them to the public as if they were established facts. But when all the possible comparisons and contrasts have been drawn and duly assessed, I suggest that it will become more apparent than ever that the real *differentia* of Christianity is the person and achievement of Jesus Himself—to Christians, no very revolutionary conclusion, but one which is worth re-stating none the less.

MODERN RACIAL PROBLEMS

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The terrible persecution of the Jews in Nazi Germany before and during the second world war; the incredibly rapid changes taking place in post-war Asia and Africa; together with extensive population movements and a phenomenal advance in world communications, forcing peoples of differing race into close and intimate contacts; have brought racial problems to the forefront as among the major issues of our time. The subject of Race Relationships is considered of such great importance that chairs in this subject have been set up in universities in order that the problems may be studied dispassionately from every angle. The discussion of the problems is carried on at almost every level—at conferences, in books, journals, newspapers, on radio and T.V., often with far more heat than light.

The Christian churches, with very few exceptions, have accepted certain fundamental principles in respect of the status and rights of all men irrespective of race or colour. They accept the belief that a multi-racial society is not only possible but desirable, and that all policies which involve the dominance of one racial group over another, or the permanent segregation of different racial stocks, are doomed to failure and disaster. We are all aware of the strong and courageous stand taken by the Anglican Church in S. Africa on the racial issue. The World Methodist Conference which met at Lake Junaluska in 1956, representing 140 nations, passed a resolution deploring the embittered strife which bedevilled human relations, and stated that 'the Church is committed by its very nature to the establishment of a human society in which discrimination based on race or colour will no longer exist'. The World Council of Churches has condemned the S. African Government's policy of Apartheid as 'incompatible with the Christian doctrine of man, and with the nature of the Church of Christ'.

When it comes to giving practical application to Christian principles and ideals within a highly complex society it at once becomes apparent that there is no quick or easy solution to the problems involved in integrating into one multi-racial society peoples as diverse in origin, culture, traditions and religion as those in S. Africa. The Christian is right in condemning cruelty and injustice, and the fear, mistrust and total disregard of sacred human values which has led to the setting up of a police state. He is right to protest against the refusal to give to black Africans the chance to develop personality. But the Christian is wrong if he thinks that the 'red-blanket kaffir' can be given equal political, economic and social status with the white African. To treat the black African as subhuman and keep him in permanent subjection is wrong, but to concede immediately all that the extreme African nationalists demand would be

disastrous folly. Rights always imply responsibilities, and where those responsibilities cannot, in the nature of the case, be accepted the rights must be temporarily denied. For a society owes a duty not only to the individuals which compose it, but it owes to itself the duty of self-preservation.

Many problems of race relationships are closely bound up with other grave problems which equally demand solution—problems involved in the existence of very different ideologies; problems which grow out of the surging spirit of nationalism; problems arising from the sudden emergence of a large number of new nations, some of which possess few leaders with political or administrative experience; problems of the relation of national sovereignties to world government and world needs; problems involved in the necessary contacts between highly industrialized peoples of advanced material culture with races just emerging from tribalism; above all problems which arise from miscegenation and which, in our societies as at present constituted, often bear so hard upon the families and individuals involved.

The intense racial animosities of our time are, in large measure, a legacy from the past. The growing contacts throughout the nineteenth and the early part of the twentieth centuries between what were the highly industrialised and dominant white races and the races inhabiting Asia and Africa were inevitable. Those contacts were characterised by a mixture of selfish materialism and altruistic idealism, exploitation and mission, domination and service. It was inevitable that close contact with what appeared to be backward and uncivilised races should lead to a belief in the innate superiority of the white races, but it was equally inevitable that the dissemination of western ideologies, whether modern Christianity, Humanism or Marxist Communism, should sooner or later lead to that belief being challenged. It is still unquestioned that Europe and N. America possess at the present time great superiority in material culture and in the technological and scientific knowledge by which that material culture is achieved. But it is doubtful for how long that material advantage will be maintained. Events which have occurred during the twentieth century have seriously shaken the belief of the white races in their moral and spiritual superiority. Today many spokesmen for Asian countries contest that superiority and contend that civilizations rooted in the basic tenets of Confucianism, Hinduism or Buddhism are more fitted to give moral and spiritual leadership to the world than is the so-called Christian civiliziaton of the West.

The problems of race relationship arise whenever peoples of different race are brought together in close contact, but only become really acute when those contacts involve large groups of peoples which differ fundamentally in political and social organization, religion, education, language, culture, customs and traditions, as in S. Africa and the southern

states of U.S.A. today. They are, however, by no means insignificant even when different tribal or national groups stemming from the same original stock are forced into close relationship. Thus even in S. Africa racial problems arise, not only from the relationships between white and black, but from the inter-relationships between different tribes of Bantu stock. Serious racial problems occur in India, in the Muslim world, and in many countries where the white man is but a small and insignificant part of the population.

The most obvious solution of the racial problem is for the stronger race to rid itself of the problem altogether by exterminating the weaker race. It has been suggested that, at the dawn of human societies, our Cro-Magnon ancestors solved the problem by exterminating Neanderthal man. Throughout history the attempt at exterminating one's enemies of a different race when taking over their territory has been suggested or attempted as a deliberate policy, lest the way of life, the racial purity and the religion of the victors should be corrupted by inter-relationship. Such a policy, according to Hebrew tradition, was commanded of the Hebrews by their God when they entered Canaan. The policy of ruthless extermination was attempted by Genghis Khan. A racial policy of this nature is entirely repugnant to the conscience of civilized man, as is evidenced by the universal horror at the Nazi attempt to extirpate the Jews throughout Germany.

Though a deliberate policy of the extermination of one race by another is condemned as unchristian and barbarous, it has to be recognized that when a highly civilized race comes into close contact with a backward race there is a tendency for the latter to die out. In face of the new impact the traditional sanctions and social patterns, which act as a cohesive and stabilising force within tribal societies, become weakened or destroyed, whilst at the same time it is found impossible to assimilate and adopt the 'way of life' of the more dominant race, with all that is involved. When a tribe becomes a 'rootless' society it may lose its will to survive. In modern times governments which exercise control and trusteeship over backward races have become increasingly alive to this problem, and it is to their credit that they have often been remarkably successful in arresting or reversing a process which was leading to the extermination of what were once virile and powerful tribes.

It is, however, doubtful if the preservation of such primitive tribes as separate entities is justifiable unless they have still a distinctive contribution to make within this modern world. The preservation of tribal groups as ethnological 'museum pieces' for scientific study by the white man hardly justifies the deliberate reversal of a natural process of assimilation by which a weaker racial group becomes gradually integrated into the civilization of a more dominant race. Nevertheless, civilized races have a grave responsibility towards backward and primitive peoples. In

this connection I would like to quote from a review of a recent book by Adrian Cowell.[1] 'One of the gravest responsibilities of civilized man is the welfare of the primitive peoples of the earth. Yet almost everywhere this is being ignored. In countless places all over the world independent communities, fascinating as evidence of the endless variety and genius of mankind, are being overwhelmed by the crudest elements of our culture. Ordered communities of independent, dignified people, with their own arts and crafts and customs and dress, are transformed in a year or two into so much cheap labour for mines or oilfields, or are reduced to helpless drabness by competitive missionization.'

A second attempted solution of the problem of race relationships which has numerous historical precedents is one in which a more dominant and powerful race has either enslaved a weaker race or given it a permanently subservient role in the community as 'hewers of wood and drawers of water'. It would be impossible for me in this paper to sketch, even briefly, the complete and utter failure of this policy. Whenever it has been attempted on a large scale and over a considerable period it has raised new problems for the society which has attempted it of such magnitude and complexity as almost to baffle solution. Many of the hardest problems of race relationship which face the modern world stem from the attempts of civilized man to provide for himself cheap labour, either by enslaving backward peoples or by creating such social and political conditions that those peoples had either to become a submerged labour force or starve. Although in this matter also the conscience of the civilized world revolts against the idea of the permanent subjection of one race by another, there are to be found many people who argue that no community can exist without its 'hewers of wood and drawers of water', and that backward peoples are naturally fitted for such tasks; and that they are materially and economically far better off than they were before.

It is strange, but nevertheless true, that most of the condemnation of Apartheid is not against Apartheid at all, but against the deliberate policy of the S. African government, faced in the urban areas, which contain 42.6 per cent. of the total population, with a situation in which white, coloured and black live in close association, which subjects the non-whites to a position of permanent social, political and economic inferiority. As one writer has put it,[2] 'The misfortune of the white S. Africans, which is dashing them towards their Bastille, is that they do not know Africans as human beings. They know them only as servants or 'boys'—boys being distinctly less than men—and have never been able to get through to them on an equal level'.

[1]Review by N. Guppy in the *Observer*, 25 May 1960 of *The Heart of the Forest*, by Adrian Cowell (Gollancz, 1960).

[2]Review by Sylvester Stein in the *Observer* of *Drawn in Colour*, by Noni Jabavu (John Murray, 1960).

It is because they realise the impossibility of the present situation, and the inevitability of disaster if it continues, that the leaders of S. Africa have decided on Apartheid as a difficult choice between two possible alternatives—that of total separation and that of total integration.

As the Tomlinson Report[3] puts it (p. 13) 'The European population of S. Africa is faced with two alternatives. Either they must permit the Bantu to encroach and absorb them in their living sphere, or else they must allow the Bantu full opportunity for positive development *alongside* of and not in *opposition* to the European sphere of life' (p. 16). 'A large number of Europeans are seeking for safety in a via media which will *not* lead to a parting of the ways, at least in their own lifetime. But the leading groups at the head of the two formative poles now termed 'apartheid' on the one hand and 'liberalism' on the other, are witnesses to the fact that in their minds the time has already arrived for choosing between the maintenance of separate identities and the process of coalescence.'

It is absolutely imperative that those who speak for the Christian Church and the Christian conscience should fully understand the issue involved, and should be able to present cogent reasons as to why an evolutionary development towards a multi-racial society in S. Africa and elsewhere is to be preferred to any other solution of the racial problem. They should not blind themselves to the enormous difficulties which must inevitably arise both for the nation and for the individual in following a path which leads to multi-racial integration.

It is not always fully appreciated that many nations have saved themselves from the problems facing S. Africa by means of skilfully devised immigration policies. Whereas the assimilation into a culture of a comparatively small number of carefully selected persons of alien stock presents no very grave problem, the sudden influx into a nation of great hordes of people who differ in race, culture, language, economic and moral standards and religion might have calamitous results. The 'White Australia' policy is not fundamentally different from that of Apartheid. It is a deliberate attempt to avoid the possibility of racial integration by keeping non-whites out of the country, whilst Apartheid is a deliberate policy of separating races which have already become interdependent. It is quite possible that, in face of the increasing population pressures of E. Asia, the 'White Australia' policy may have political consequences of the first magnitude.

The men who have devised the policy of Apartheid are neither fools, knaves, nor moral lepers. They are statesmen who, having carefully

[3]Summary of the Report of the Commission for the Socio-Economic Development of the Bantu Areas within the Union of S. Africa. Pretoria, 1955. (Known as the Tomlinson Report.) This report should be read and studied by all opponents of Apartheid.

assessed the present situation in S. Africa to the best of their ability, have come to the conclusion that the only practical solution is a separate development of the two main racial groups of which S. Africa is composed. Unfortunately the long period of white domination, the cruel oppression of the non-whites and their political disfranchisement, and the establishment of what is virtually a police state, have destroyed in large measure any belief in the good-faith of the white man on the part of the black African. Yet the policy of Apartheid, as set forth in the Tomlinson Report envisages the Bantu possessing their own inalienable territory within which full opportunities will be given for individual and communal development. In this territory the Bantu will be given charge of their own affairs, and every help and encouragement to develop a diversified economy with urban development and industry and with ecclesiastical, educational, medical and welfare activities.

To many people in S. Africa and elsewhere the separation of the white and black populations of the country would involve such colossal reorganization and expense as to be entirely impracticable. In the great urban and industrial centres the white and black peoples have need of each other, and in any case there are almost half a million Asiatics and over a million coloured people. The only hope they see for S. Africa is a gradual integration of the whole population into a multi-racial society in which equal political, economic and social privileges and opportunities are offered to all irrespective of race or colour. If such a multi-racial society could be peacefully brought into existence it would prove an example to the whole world. It is pointed out that S. Africa is the mother country of the two main groups, and economic integration has already gone to such length that the life and prosperity of S. Africa is based on mutual economic interdependence. It is believed that a further process of christianization, development and westernization of the Bantu would lead to a disappearance of differences in civilization, culture and religion. Friendly relations with the preponderant indigenous peoples of Africa would give security to the European population. The uneasy conscience of the white S. Africans in regard to their black neighbours would be eased, and the great principles of the Christian religion in regard to the status and dignity of all members of the human race would be affirmed.

Two basic fears haunt the white population of S. Africa, Rhodesia and Kenya, and indeed in all places where a considerable white minority live in close proximity to black or coloured peoples. They stand in the way of progress towards a multi-racial society in which equal rights are granted irrespective of race or colour. These fears are not without considerable justification.

In the first place the concession of equal rights to the Bantu is regarded as endangering the existence of the white man and his civilization. In S. Africa, apart from the Asiatics and the Coloured, the Bantu outnumber

the whites by more than three to one. They are in all stages of transition from barbarism to civilization, with the masses still on the other side of the dividing line. There is the possibility that they might absorb the European minority with the consequent total collapse of a culture and way of life which has been built up over three centuries. There may even be a relapse to the lower cultural level of the majority. We know that even in this country the amenities of a district may become seriously impaired by the influx into it of large numbers of people with lower cultural and moral standards. Few of us, I believe, would maintain our Christian idealism untarnished if the house next door was taken over by a large number of coloured people, living a family to a room and following a way of life which is quite natural to them in their own country. Racial animosities are most deeply stirred when a serious threat is made to our economic, cultural, moral and religious standards.

A second great fear that haunts the whites in S. Africa is that of miscegenation. It is feared that with the establishment of a multi-racial society fully integrated both politically and economically there would arise biological integration on a wide scale. Mixed marriages would become more and more common. It is, I believe, true to say that in most races, generally speaking, the majority of people have an abhorrence of mixed marriages. This is certainly true both as regards the whites and the Bantu in S. Africa. Mixed marriages involve a certain contracting out from the cohesive group in which the individual has been reared, leading to a measure of repudiation of the standards and codes accepted within that group. This is evidenced even in the marriages between Christians and Jews, Protestants and Roman Catholics, and we know of Christian sects that have even frowned upon marriages contracted with persons outside the narrow limits of their own membership. It may be pointed out that in Christianity there are no moral or religious sanctions against marriage with a member of another race. All through history racial admixture has been common. There is no such thing as a 'pure' race. Ezekiel pointed out long ago that Jerusalem had an Amorite for a father and a Hittite for a mother. The blood which flows in our veins has been derived from many varied racial strains—Celts, Norsemen, Teutons, French Huguenots, Spaniards. In the early pioneering days, wherever the white men went, to China, India, Africa, S. America, their first ventures in exploration and colonization were made without their women folk, and they took wives from the native women. This certainly happened on a large scale with the Boers and English who colonized S. Africa. Nevertheless, as soon as conditions prevailed which made it possible for women to emigrate, the white men preferred, in general, to contract marriages with women of their own race. From that time onwards religious sanctions and considerations of class and caste led to the stabilisation of society and its stratification on, more or less, racial lines. The fear of miscegenation on a large scale, even

within a multi-racial society, is not justified. There must, of course, always be cases in which sexual passion or true affinity and love break through the barriers created by race, colour and caste.

In this paper I have dealt rather extensively with the situation in S. Africa because it seems to me that this is a key area in any consideration of the modern problems of race relationship. It is perhaps presumptuous for one who is not personally involved to attempt an assessment of a very complicated situation. Yet we have a duty as Christians to try to understand, and to make our own judgement in all charity in regard to the racial policies advocated. For these problems which arise from the close impact of diverse races upon one another are of crucial importance for the future well-being of the world in which we live.

Problems of race relationship often find a comparatively easy solution by the individual Christian on a personal level, but are found to be quite intractable in the mass. During over twenty years' experience of living in the midst of an alien civilization, I found that to treat all men and women with friendliness, courtesy and respect usually met with a quick and ready response, and often revealed high qualities of dignity, self-respect and honour among those who were all too often considered illiterate and unteachable. Yet those personal contacts with representatives of another race, often characterised by genuine affection and mutual respect, could not blind one to the very differences in our respective ways of life. Dr. Albert Schweitzer, with his great love for the Africans among whom he has lived and worked, has never been unmindful of their serious limitations, and has governed his mission station at Lambarene with a large measure of paternalism and authoritarianism. Every human society has within it a measure of stratification. Absolute political, economic and social equality is no more than a dream of the idealist. The modern democratic principle of government of the people, for the people, which the white man has exported to Asia and Africa, is not practical politics in a country in which the majority of the people have not the slightest idea of what democracy is. What appears to be essential is that the stratification of a society should not be based on colour or racial prejudice; that government should be *for* all the people and not manipulated for the advantage of one small section alone. Reasonable demands should be sympathetically met. Political, economic, social and educational opportunities should be open to all peoples of whatever race or colour in so far as they can take advantage of them. The hope should never be taken away from the lowliest and the most backward that he may aspire to the highest positions which a country has to offer, in fair competition with his fellow-men. Above all, as the basis of any multi-racial group, whether it be a church, a secular society, a nation, or a commonwealth of nations, there should lie the common belief that each race has something distinctive and valuable to offer, and every effort should be made to call that forth and make full use of it.

THE ANGLICAN TRADITION OF SOUND LEARNING

By the Rev. W. G. Fallows, M.A., Principal of Ripon Hall, Oxford

There are few better descriptions of the scientific attitude and the ideal of the disinterested pursuit of knowledge than that contained in a letter which T. H. Huxley wrote to Charles Kingsley: 'Science seems to me to teach in the highest and strongest manner the great truth which is embodied in the Christian conception of entire surrender to the will of God. Sit down before facts as a little child, be prepared to give up every preconceived notion, follow humbly wherever and to whatever abysses nature leads, or you shall learn nothing. I have only begun to learn content and peace of mind since I have resolved at all risks to do this'. When every allowance has been made for the differences between the natural sciences and other branches of learning this noble ideal, marked both by humility and objectivity, remains the guiding light for all who seek the truth. Nor can an exception be made when the subject is Theology, no matter how different this discipline is from other fields of enquiry. Though the truth is often hidden from the wise and revealed unto babes, and God may choose the weak to confound the mighty, we are nevertheless commanded to love Him with all our mind. The familiar phrase in the Bidding prayer, 'that true religion and sound learning may forever flourish', is ultimately a tautology; the one can never flourish without the other.

It may seem arrogant, therefore, to claim, as the title of this paper implies, that a tradition of sound learning is an especial feature of the Anglican tradition. We do not, of course, suggest that other Christian Communions have been deficient in sound learning. The implication is that the position of the Church of England in Christendom is best understood in the light of its appeal to Scripture, reason and tradition. An ordination candidate once spoke to Bishop Mandell Creighton about a dilemma in which he found himself: 'I wish that I had a clear answer to the question, "What is the position of the Church of England in Christendom?" I know the claim of the Church of Rome, that it is a universal and divinely appointed institution, to which all men must belong. I know the claim of the Greek Church that it preserves the Catholic Faith, and sets it forth in ancient forms, intelligible to simple people. I do not know any corresponding formula to describe the position of the Church of England'. It was in answer to that dilemma that Mandell Creighton affirmed: 'The formula which most explains the position of the Church of England is that it rests on an appeal to sound learning'. Within the time available to me I propose to examine this lofty claim (i) by taking a brief look at some of those who have been famous for their learning, (ii) by considering what are the special characteristics of Anglicanism that enable it to make this claim, and (iii) by considering some of the implications of this claim for the life and witness of the Church of England today.

(I)

When Creighton enunciated his formula that the Church of England rests on an appeal to sound learning, he was thinking chiefly of those divines of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries by whose learning and labours the Anglican Church was fashioned. Certainly we must concentrate on those formative centuries in examining his claim. At the same time we do well to recall that, as members of the *Ecclesia Anglicana,* we have in our ecclesiastical pedigree men of an earlier age who were renowned for their learning. The gallery of fame includes Bede, the Father of English historians, whom Boniface described as 'a candle of the Church lit by the Holy Spirit'. Alcuin, though most of his life was spent on the continent, was a Northumbrian by birth and education. King Alfred, rightly styled 'The Great', was a scholar Prince whose twin ambitions were the promotion of peace and the advancement of religion and learning. John of Salisbury, scholar and humanist, in the twelfth century, and Roger Bacon, scholar and scientist in the thirteenth century, helped to preserve the fame of the English Church for learning during the Middle Ages. Of these medieval worthies Roger Bacon in particular is significant. Boldly publishing his conclusions he refused to be deflected from his purpose by the fact that they conflicted with the accepted doctrines of the Church. He challenged the authority of the Church and, in a sense, anticipated T. H. Huxley's ideal by maintaining the right of every student to pursue his search for truth no matter where it led.

Thus the Anglican tradition of sound learning may be said to have had its roots in the pre-Reformation Church. It is however in the religious revolution of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that its validity must be tested. Before the storms burst England was already the congenial home of the New Learning. Erasmus described it as 'the abode and stronghold of both virtue and knowledge'. His affection for England sprang naturally from his admiration of the noble group of English humanists and in John Colet he found a man in whom virtue and knowledge were combined in an unusual degree.

In tracing the Anglican tradition of sound learning we can only pause here and there, and the busts of those whom we recall must be carved on cherry stones. For our purpose Colet is the figure who best exemplifies the new learning in its English dress, and its significance for the religious upheaval that was soon to engulf the whole European scene. His personal piety, his learning, his hatred of ecclesiastical abuses, his loathing of superstition and his modernity of outlook make him an attractive figure. He taught that the Mosaic account of the Creation was intended to convey a moral lesson not a scientific one. 'Moses', he said, 'wrote after the manner of a popular poet'. His lectures on St. Paul's epistles were critical in spirit, and in them he pleaded for a recovery of the discipline of the

primitive Church. As a reformer before the Reformers he had no confidence in legislation as a means of removing the abuses of the Church. This was the burden of his famous sermon in 1512, when he preached at the opening of the Convocation that had been summoned to deal with the Lollard heresy. In his distrust of law as a weapon of reformation he has something to teach us today. He put his faith not in legislation but in education. It is not without significance that his most abiding memorial is a famous school.

Creighton's dictum that the Church of England rests on an appeal to sound learning was, of course, made with special reference to the English reformation. Reform was only possible by returning to the principles of sound learning, and in England the appeal to the Scriptures and the 'decent order of the ancient Fathers' could be more calmly and dispassionately pursued than in other lands. The crying need was to disentangle the essential truth from the mass of opinion which had gathered round it. We need not be surprised that the operation was nowhere entirely successful, but neither need we be ashamed (as some Churchmen seem to be) of the course which the Reformation took in England. It is a commonplace of historical textbooks that there was no one outstanding leader of the English Reformation. But there was a deliberate attempt to base the changes in religion on sound learning. It was to this that Cranmer appealed in defence of the changes both in doctrine and worship. In the words of Bishop Headlam: 'The ideal of many of our reformers had been the transformation of our institutions by an appeal to reason and history rather than the assertion of a rigid and narrow dogmatic standpoint'.

Anglican divines of the sixteenth century were not builders of theological systems. The works of Anglican divinity were prompted by particular needs. They were polemical in character even when, as in the case of Richard Hooker, they were essentially eirenic in tone. Hooker is the noblest Anglican divine of the sixteenth century, and no survey of the Anglican tradition of sound learning could omit a reference to the author of 'The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity'. In an age of violent controversy he rarely offends against the spirit of his own golden sentence, 'There will come a time when three words uttered with charity and meekness shall receive a far more blessed reward than three thousand volumes written with disdainful sharpness of wit'. In his constructive defence of the Anglican Church as against Rome and the Puritans, his appeal is to Scripture, reason, and tradition. He brought to his task largeness of knowledge and comprehensiveness of judgment. 'The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity', abounding though it is in learning, is pre-eminent among the polemical literature of the Anglican settlement because of its masterly grasp of fundamental principles. For Hooker, human reason duly informed is the court of ultimate appeal. It is not an infallible judge. It is often a judge perplexed and doubtful. But after all it is the best we can resort to. The

epithet 'judicious' applied to Hooker, owes its aptness to Hooker's steady resolve to assume nothing, to listen positively to evidence of every kind and from whatever quarter, to test it and to estimate its value before reaching any conclusion or pronouncing any decision. Hooker is the characteristic Anglican divine, and the claim that the Church of England rests on an appeal to sound learning owes as much to his reputation as to any other. A Scottish Presbyterian thus sums it up: 'If the Church of England had never produced any other writer of the same stamp it might have boasted in Hooker one of the noblest and most rational intellects which ever enriched Christian literature or adorned a great cause'.

The Patristic studies of the seventeenth century divines gained for the English clergy the proud designation: *'Clerus Anglicanus stupor mundi'*. We can only take a passing glance at a selected few of the galaxy of seventeenth century names. The 'ever memorable' John Hales represents a type of refined Anglican scholarship combined with a wide culture and a tolerant spirit. He had an abhorrence of ecclesiastical bigotry. As Chaplain to the English Ambassador in Holland Hales was present at the Synod of Dort (1618) where, in his own words, he 'bid John Calvin goodnight'. Later in his tract 'Schism and Schismatics' he gives full expression to his broad-minded comprehensiveness. 'If the special guides and Fathers of the Church would be a little sparing of encumbering Churches with superfluities, or not ever-rigid either in reviving of obsolete customs, or imposing new, there would be far less cause of schism or superstition.' John Hales is in line with Chillingworth (1602-1644) whose plea that 'the Bible only is the religion of protestants' was really a defence of the rights of reason and free enquiry in doctrinal matters. In Hales, too, we find the germ of Jeremy Taylor's plea in the 'Liberty of Prophesying': that 'men should not make more necessities than God made, which indeed are not many', and this again is echoed in Whichcote's aphorism: 'Truth lies in a little compass and narrow room, vitals in religion are few'. Throughout the seventeenth century there is a movement, discernible in the writings of Anglican divines, in the direction of liberalism, comprehension and toleration. The aim of the liberalism was to distinguish between fundamental and non-fundamental articles of belief, and to find bonds of union between separated bodies of Christians.

The Cambridge Platonists have always had a peculiar fascination for Liberal Churchmen. They present Christianity as a way of life rather than a body of dogma. Reason, mysticism, and morality, are the stuff of life. 'To go against reason', says Whichcote, 'is to go against God; it is the self-same thing, to do that which the reason of the case doth require and that which God himself doth appoint; reason is the divine governor of man's life; it is the very voice of God'. This sentiment is found in all the members of this group, but the exaltation of reason did not result in an

arid intellectualism, for reason embraced conscience and mystical insight. 'Sir', retorted Whichcote to Tuckney, 'I oppose not rational to spiritual, for spiritual is most rational'. The Latitude men, as they soon came to be called, did not escape the vilification and opprobrium of their fellow Churchmen. Edward Fowler, afterwards Bishop of Gloucester, 'heard them represented as a generation of people that have revived the abominable principles of the old gnostics; as a company of men that are prepared for the embracing of any religion, and to renounce or to subscribe to any doctrine'. In truth they were exponents of the *via media* of Anglicanism. As Simon Patrick put it; 'They approved of the virtuous mediocrity of the Church of England as distinguished from the meretricious gaudiness of the Church of Rome and the squalid sluttery of fanatic conventicles'. They were loyal Church of England men but they were free from fanaticism and the partisan temper. 'If the external form of Church Government', says Henry More, 'were of such mighty consequence as that *this* ought to be called anti-Christian, *that* reputed *jure divino,* and that it was essential to a true Church to have such or such a kind of government rather than another, Christ would have left more express command and direction concerning it'. No doubt they were defective in their understanding of the institutional aspect of the Christian Church, but the significance of this group lies in the fact that they were fighting the battle of toleration. They were also fighting the battle for an autonomous spiritual life independent of the two infallibilities which were then contending against each other. In this stand for freedom, comprehension and toleration, they represent an important element in the Anglican tradition of sound learning.

And what more shall I say, for the time will fail me if I tell of Butler, Berkeley, Paley and Warburton, defenders of the Anglican tradition in the face of threats from the Deists in the eighteenth century. Nor can we stop now to consider Essays and Reviews, Lux Mundi, and the Anglican Scholars who rescued the Church from a biblical obscurantism and a scientific backwater in the nineteenth century. These men, among them Maurice, Lightfoot, Westcott, Hort, Driver, Sanday, Rashdall, Inge—to name but a few—have their honourable place in the Anglican tradition of sound learning and have played their part in rescuing the fair name of the *'Ecclesia Anglicana'* from the oblivion it might otherwise have experienced and deserved. Not a few of those who have carried the torch of enlightenment have been scurrilously derided in their time. A leading Church newspaper wrote in 1869, 'On that darkest day in the whole year was perpetrated the darkest crime which had ever been perpetrated in the English Church'. The crime was the consecration of Frederick Temple (a contributor to *Essays and Reviews*) to the See of Exeter. Pusey spoke of him as having 'participated in the ruin of countless souls'. Archdeacon Denison said the young were being 'tainted and corrupted, and thrust

almost to hell by the action of this book'. More recent examples will readily spring to mind. Some of the most distinguished members of our Union have suffered a similar ignominy. The contributors to the Girton Conference in 1921 were described as 'hierophants of heresy' and 'wreckers of the faith'. The lot of the prophet and the pioneer, especially in the sphere of religion, is, like that of the policeman of Penzance, 'not a happy one'. Nevertheless it is by the witness of such men that the Anglican tradition of sound learning has been maintained and that we, in our time, can profess a reasonable faith.

(II)

Sound learning can only flourish in at atmosphere of freedom; when liberty is lacking learning will be in shackles. In Archbishop Frederick Temple's well known saying: 'If the conclusions are prescribed the study is precluded'. Many of the scholars of the Roman Catholic Church have been hampered by the denial of freedom to follow the evidence where it leads. Not a few of the Anglican Scholars who led the way in assimilating the conclusions of biblical study and scientific knowledge would have been excommunicated if they had lived under a Papal obedience. Baron von Hugel, for instance, though he escaped excommunication (perhaps because he was a layman) was deeply sensitive to the frustrations that beset the liberal minded scholar in an authoritarian Church. The possibility of condemnation was always in his mind. He wrote to Miss Maud Petre: 'It is not necessarily cowardice or trimming if we look well around us before each step, if we plant our feet very deliberately and slowly, alternately on the stepping stones between and around which roars a raging, deep, drowning stream'. He once explained to an Anglican friend that when he had written an article he was like a dog with a bone looking for some obscure Encyclopaedia in which he might bury and conceal it from the inquisitive eyes of the authorities of his Church.[1] A tradition of sound learning can never flourish amid such fears and tensions, and the claim that the Anglican Church rests on an appeal to sound learning can only be made because it has always allowed a wider freedom of interpretation than the papal system.

Perhaps the most characteristic feature of Anglicanism is its combination of authority and freedom, of order and liberty. 'The work of the Church of England', said Creighton, 'is to maintain truth, held according to liberty yet with order. . . . It is hard to maintain the three together but this constitutes England's work. Creighton, as he once confessed, was a fanatical Anglican, but he is not alone in seizing on these qualities as constituting the essence of the Anglican position. Dean Malden, for instance, wrote in a similar vein: 'The Anglican Communion stands for a

[1]Garbett: *The Claims of the Church of England*, p. 25.

particular theory of the nature of truth, which alone can make the union of the Christian world possible. It believes that truth can flourish out of the earth and that righteousness can look down from heaven. But there is no short or easy route to this consummation. It can never be attained unless the apparently hostile principles of authority and freedom are each given their proper place within the Church. The extreme difficulty of this task can never be an excuse for abandoning it'.

There are other features of the Anglican system which support its claim to rest on an appeal to sound learning. They follow logically and necessarily from this balance of freedom and order which we have asserted as its essential characteristic. A Church which allows a large measure of intellectual freedom must be comprehensive, and embrace within its fellowship a wide variety of thought and opinion. To those who prefer the more regimented and definitive system of Rome or Geneva, the comprehensiveness of the Church of England must be bewildering. But those for whom truth is many sided will find a more congenial spiritual home in the English Church, and will gladly put up with its untidiness for the sake of the elbow room.

The Anglican Church professes fallibility; it shuns definition for which the English have little reputation, and it preserves a reticence in spiritual things which the subject matter of religion so often demands but is so rarely accorded. Bishop Andrewe's answer to Cardinal Bellarmine on the question of the real presence is characteristically Anglican: 'No less than you we believe in a true presence; we make no rash definition as to the nature of the presence'. Intellectual integrity necessitates a reverent agnosticism in many of the traditional teachings of the Church. 'Independence of mind', says the Bishop of Southwell, 'should be one of the fruits of faith. If a man fundamentally believes in God, he will have the courage to doubt, to ask questions, to express unpopular opinions, and not to seek security in gang thinking—the escape mechanism of the unconvinced. There lies more doubt in honest faith than in half the ideological dogmas'. At its best Anglicanism has been content to leave open questions open, to leave a large freedom for its members, clerical and lay. That freedom has been secured by the tradition of sound learning, and by a spirit of free critical enquiry. That spirit is as much needed today as it was at the time of the Reformation, or as it was in the face of the biblical studies and scientific discoveries of the nineteenth century.

(III)

We can only indicate briefly some of the implications of the appeal to sound learning for the life of the Church today. Much more needs to be done than has yet been attempted to assimilate the results of scientific discovery and to present the Christian faith in the light of new knowledge. It is difficult, for instance, to see how the Church's traditional teaching on

the fall, on sin and infant baptism can be reconciled with our knowledge of man's origin and nature.

Another illustration of the need for sound learning today may be cited from another and very different field, namely, that of Church relations. Reunion discussions are often bedevilled by those Anglicans who hold on at all cost to the opening rubric of the Prayer Book Ordinal: 'It is evident unto all men diligently reading Holy Scriptures and ancient authors, that from the Apostles' time there have been these orders of Ministers in Christ's Church; Bishops, Priests and Deacons'. Individual scholars have indicated the unsoundness of this statement. Thus Henson wrote: 'That theory is notoriously abandoned by most serious historical scholars outside the unreformed Churches. So too, the late Bishop Rawlinson admitted: '. . . the document states what is unfortunately not true'. Not a few controversialists still take shelter under this umbrella. It is surely time, in the interests of sound learning, that our Church repudiated this erroneous statement. These may seem trivial matters of scholarship but they are indications of a perennial need and often have consequences much wider than the immediate points at issue.

So, too, there is a present need of the Anglican tradition of sound learning, of a wide and comprehensive liberty, and of the open mind in the whole field of Christian apologetics. In much religious thought and writing in recent years the opposite tendencies have predominated. There has been a narrowing of vision, an escape to the supposed security of dogmatic positions and the ancient strongholds of Church or Scripture. In his recent book, *Asking the Right Questions,* the Bishop of Southwell has made a moving plea for a recovery of liberalism. 'Today', he says, 'liberal is a dirty name. The liberals (so far as they still survive) are regarded as the black sheep of the family, whom tactful friends care not to mention. There is, I think, no doubt that the Church of England has been moving insensibly to the right. It seems to be becoming more rigorist both in its teaching and in its pastoral discipline'. The Bishop discerns and deplores the same tendencies in the study of Christian origins and biblical exposition. 'Some scholars appear to assume—perhaps too lightly—that the critical and historical problems about Christian origins have now been settled. But have they? Or have they merely been waived? One has a suspicion at times that biblical commentators are rather too ready to run away from them and to shelter behind theological phrases than to pursue objective historical investigation.' Such is the mood of our time. 'The approach today is dogmatic and *a priori* and few of the young will listen to anything else.' But the mood will pass, perhaps is already passing.

The trouble with the world, as Bertrand Russell once said, is that the stupid are cocksure and the intelligent are full of doubt. 'There has never been a time', as the writer of the most recent Crockford Preface says, 'when the intellectual problem facing the Church has been more serious.

. . . It is on the intellectual level that the Church seems to fail most at present'. We have still a long way to go before the challenge of Atheistic humanism is met and the discoveries that have been made since the publication of *The Origin of Species* are assimilated by Christian thought. In that great endeavour the characteristics of the Anglican tradition of sound learning, and not least its reticence, will have to be recovered. We must begin by confessing how little we know if the little we know is to become for us the light by which we walk. 'Even today', says Dr. Langmead Casserley, 'I am often struck at conferences of theologians by the jaunty and confident way in which they will embark upon the discussion of questions about which, as it seems to me, a properly reverent theology would prefer to remain entirely agnostic.'[2] If I may be permitted one further quotation from Bishop Barry's recent book, it would be from his final chapter which is a moving plea for a frank recognition of a Christian Agnosticism: 'And there has, all the time, been some confusion between "faith" as the commitment of the whole person and "the faith" as the corpus of Christian doctrines. We must recognise that for some men at some times, the sincere commitment of the mind to God may require some mental reservations about one or another clause in the creeds or this or that element in the tradition. They would not be loving God with their minds by pretending to believe what they don't, or by unconvinced subscription to orthodoxy'.

There are, of course, many other ways in which our theme has pressing implications for the Church in the modern world. One of the most important is the bearing of the Anglican tradition of sound learning on the education and training of the clergy. Many new and interesting experiments are being tried. The future of the Anglican Church depends more on the quality (and not least the educational quality) of the Clergy than on any other single factor. The ideal of an educated Clergy was one that the English Reformers of the sixteenth century strove to achieve. Cranmer had a deep concern for a devout, educated and preaching ministry. A steady improvement began and continued in the intellectual equipment of the clergy so that 'it seems likely that the improvements in their qualifications under Elizabeth and the early Stuarts brought the learning of the parish clergy to a higher standard than it had ever reached before.'[3] A Church which claims to rest on sound learning and to appeal to the authority of reason, must always depend for its effectiveness on a steady supply of men of intellectual ability. The demand for a learned clergy, so strong in the seventeenth century and so amply supplied in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, is no less a need in our day. It is difficult,

[2]*The Retreat from Christianity in the Modern World*, p. 74.

[3]Quoted by Norman Sykes *From Sheldon to Secker*, p. 11, from an unpublished study by Dr. C. M. Barratt.

however, to avoid the conclusion that in the twentieth century there has been a real decline in this matter. This is one of the urgent questions that faces our Church. The variety of the modern experiments that are being tried, and the new ideas for the training of the ministry that are widely canvassed, will avail nothing if the educational attainments are overlooked.

In defending Creighton's thesis that the Church of England rests on an appeal to sound learning, I am not unmindful of the dangers and pitfalls inherent in such a position. To some extent the appeal is limited to the learned. The task of popularising the assured results of scholarship is not always easy; some things are incapable of simplification. It is an appeal to a fluctuating tradition. Ronald Knox, in his 'Spiritual Aeniad', has a jibe about Professor Sanday issuing periodical bulletins about how much can be believed. Foundations sometimes become loose stones. The disagreements of scholars are notorious, and science itself is always on the move. Unanimity is seldom secured. The conclusions of scholars are frequently upsetting. In many ways it is easier to give up the struggle and to resort to some other final court of appeal that is less disturbing and more definite. But that would be the way of intellectual cowardice. The appeal to sound learning is ultimately an appeal to reason, though it does not exclude the evidence of mysticism and the inner light. But the final court is the reason of man. We need not be ashamed of such an appeal even though it has been temporarily dislodged from the throne. In the Appendix to his Hulsean Lectures, F. J. A. Hort subscribed a note: 'It may be urged that the right or rather duty of personal verification of truth here maintained is in effect to set up the authority of reason in matters of faith. So be it. There can be no surer sign of decrepitude and decay in faith than a prevalent nervousness about naming and commending reason. . . . The faith of ordinary people would be far more clear and sure if they had freely been instructed in the responsibilities of reason'. It is part of the glory of the Anglican tradition that, at its best, it has made this faith in reason the basis of its appeal. For those who want to save their souls and not to sell them there is no other way.

CHRISTIANITY AND BIOLOGY

Canon Charles E. Raven, D.D., F.B.A.

In the long record of the efforts of mankind, and particularly of human religious experience, to appreciate and adjust itself to the findings of modern science the year that has just passed will always hold a place of some importance. For biology in its full sense, and including both physiology and psychology, is obviously the field in which scientific achievements affect most immediately the interpretation of religion, and in 1959 the centenary of the publication of the *Origin of Species* gave occasion to us all to enquire how far that event still challenged and confused our theology and ethics. Whatever the verdict—and the broad lines of it are surely now obvious—it is plainly opportune for us to discuss this aspect of the familiar antithesis, 'Religion and Science', not less so if we realise that the same year produced work which made Darwinism in its strict sense look curiously out-of-date. It may be well to consider briefly the centenary and draw attention to the defects which its celebration disclosed, before we go on to discuss the scale and significance of the situation that is opening up before us.

Of evolution it is evident that the triumph is complete. That creation is to be regarded not as an event in the distant past but as a process traceable over immense stretches of time and space, continuous, coherent and so far as this planet is concerned, now largely interpretable, is a fact securely established and basic to our whole life and thought. *Eppur si muove* may never have been said by Galileo; but that our experience comes to us, and the history of our universe is to be expressed, as movement, is indisputable. Whether this is a condition of ultimate reality or only of our appreciation of it may be and is arguable, but for us process is plainly the only category in which our explanations can be formulated. If this means that it is necessarily limited and defective, that should not prevent us from the effort to make not only sense, but the best, of it.

There is, indeed, an evident nemesis in the failure of the Church to recognize the eminent value of the doctrine of evolution for the promotion of a Christian interpretation of the nature of the universe. Traditional opinion, especially in protestant thought, had definitely ignored the Pauline warning that mankind had been blind to the 'eternal power and divinity' of God as manifested in the witness of creation. Belief in the depravity of the whole natural order as a consequence of the fall of Adam and the emphasis on the contrast between nature and grace, earth and heaven, creation and redemption had coloured Christianity since St. Augustine and especially since the Reformation; and in Darwin's time the verdict on nature as 'red in tooth and claw with ravin' was accepted alike by Tennyson and by Huxley. The theory of a continuing development of the creative process up to and including ourselves ran counter to

the religious view of earth as a 'vale of tears' and the humanist pride in man's uniqueness. So the Church with few exceptions failed to accept the new explanation of life as at once developing from the lowliest levels through ranges of widening environment and more varied conscious control, and also as perfected through what Fabre, 'that inimitable observer', called obedience to a sublime law of sacrifice. Christendom did not realise that here in the very fabric of creation were expressed the two principles under which St. John summarizes the ministry of Jesus, the gift of life and life 'more abundant', and the precept that life is only attained as it is laid down. When Charles Kingsley, that much abused naturalist and prophet, declared his thankfulness for Darwin because through him we had got rid of the idea of the deity as a master-magician and must choose between the reign of absolute accident and of an ever-loving, ever-working God, he stood almost alone. Now that Dr. Loren Eiseley has hailed Darwin as in the true succession of John Ray and Gilbert White we may perhaps recover the biblical faith in the wisdom of God manifested in the works of creation.

But Darwinism today, at least in the form in which the zoological authorities of Britain chose to present it to us, would seem to be a very different matter. It was a disappointing picture. These typical utterances did in fact display, to an unusual degree, the two defects which have long been evident in scientific controversy—the misuse of those two familiar instruments of our national intelligence, Occam's razor and Nelson's telescope. The champions of Neo-Darwinianism produced too many examples of both of these errors.

Occam's razor when first formulated was a precept of high value. If and when a scientifically proven principle has been accepted, it should not be obscured by a multiplication of speculative hypotheses; truth is one and should be recognized as such. The misuse of it, of course, consists in the mistaken belief that any hypothesis can be of absolute infallibility; for this is, of course, the assumption of those who use it in order to impose a universal negative upon all other hypotheses. Far too many of Darwin's champions, not content with maintaining that the struggle for existence has been a factor of notable importance in eliminating the unfit and promoting selection, have gone on to insist that this is the sole cause of evolutionary progress, and to ignore and vilify all those from Lamarck downwards who have insisted that the relationship of the organism with its environment, and the will to live of the creature itself, are factors which cannot be ignored. It should be evident to anyone who like Sir Julian Huxley admits that with the coming of man evolution 'takes on a new character and becomes primarily a psycho-social process', that, from the first, evolution has never been purely determined by physical conditions. Yet, many Darwinians seem to cling to the old belief that man is a special creation

introducing radically new elements into life, or to its cognate error that nature and nurture are fundamentally opposed.

This exaggerated insistence upon a single hypothesis has led Neo-Darwinians, and Sir Julian, into a grotesque exaggeration of the importance of what they have called 'industrial melanism' in certain species of moths. This theory is based upon two facts that in some genera black mutants are not infrequent, and occur in all sorts of localities[1], and that in smoke-darkened districts these mutants escape their enemies more effectively. This is certainly established, and though the influence of selection upon colour as in the *Just So* stories has been exaggerated, no recent naturalist has disputed it. But that this adaptation has in itself any direct bearing upon the origin of new species is not yet established, and industrial melanism has done nothing at all to demonstrate it. All English moth-collectors know of a species in the same family, Boarmiidae, which on the chalk at Lewes becomes almost white and at Folkstone a pale and often banded grey, on peaty soil in the New Forest is almost black, in Dorset dull brown and at Sidmouth terra cotta; and in spite of this its varieties show no sign of producing specific distinctness. If I may be personal, of the most famous black mutants in which fifty years ago the black was dominant and intermediates unknown, I caught at Ham Street five years ago a fully graduated series ranging from black to the original pepper and salt mixture. There is in fact at present more evidence for Linnaeus' theory that new species arose from fertile hybrids than for Darwin's. But my point is not that selection is unimportant, but that other hypotheses cannot on that account be rejected.

The second abuse is that of Nelson's telescope. We are all of us prone to turn a blind eye upon what we do not wish to see. But it remains that far too many scientists seem deliberately to imitate the admiral at Copenhagen: they look through their telescope and then declare that they see nothing. Theologians have been notoriously guilty in this respect—witness the Barthian denial that St. Paul attached importance to the witness of nature and to natural theology. But examples were repeatedly shown by the champions of Darwin and not only in their denigration of Lamarck of whom it can certainly be affirmed that he was one of the greatest scientists of his age if not of all time, that he was maliciously libelled in the 'éloge' which Cuvier pronounced on him, and that he did not mean or say that animals could evolve by wanting to do so. For another and personal instance the interested reader may refer to Dr. David Lack's criticism of my treatment of parasitism in the Cuckoo[2] in which his only definite evidence is concerned with the colours of the Cuckoo's eggs, a

[1]The idea that they are due to chemical impregnation of the food-plant and that this occurs in industrial areas is unproven and probably erroneous. In Britain for example Delamere Forest is not in any sense 'industrial'.

[2]Cf. *Evolutionary Theory and Christian Belief*, pp. 52, 57-8.

matter on which I had deliberately said nothing at all and which was wholly irrelevant to my argument.

The fact is of course, that ever since the work of J. M. Baldwin and of Lloyd Morgan the whole argument as to acquired characteristics should have been restated; and that in view of recent work in many fields the matter of evolution requires and has been receiving a fresh and much wider interpretation. The old categories and arguments are nowadays obsolescent. Biology has or ought to have changed its whole scope and character. A century ago, in the time of T. H. Huxley, biology was virtually confined to taxonomy and morphology. He had never seen or studied the living organism. With the increasing cleavage between field-naturalists and the men of the museums and laboratories, biology ceased to have much concern with life: its task was the dissection of the dead, not the observation of the living. Then with the rise of psychology came Pavlov and the era of cages and mazes wherein both dietetics and behaviour could be observed and interpreted. It is only lately, and largely under medical influence, that organism and environment have been seen as mutually and intimately involved. Rats do not live in mazes and dogs exposed to human tests do not disclose their own peculiar and perhaps non-human capabilities. It is as absurd to estimate the 'intelligence' of a dog which lives largely by sense of smell by subjecting him to human and visual tests as it would be to judge a human being by the hearing standards of a dolphin, or a bat. Recent work is thus disclosing to us realms of awareness and modes of response of which till lately we have been ignorant in ourselves and which we have ignored in others. What will the problems of experience and its interpretation look like when we have had another century of study of extra-sensory and of animal perceptions?

Meanwhile, we can consider two other events of more importance than the Darwin centenary for our subject. Both are connected with the establishment of the belief in the unity, consistency and continuity of the creative process, with the investigation and exposition of the whole evolution of our planet from its origin to the present day, and consequently with consequences of the highest significance both for theology and for religion.

The first of these is the recognition that by use of modern developments in physics and chemistry and their application to the study of the origin and structure, transmission and expansion of life, the ancient mysteries have been illuminated, and a full story of the mechanisms of the process been prepared. When in December last, a team of British and American scientists presented over B.B.C. television a detailed record, and illustrated it by the evidence of the electron-microscope on objects like the viruses imperceptible by light, and brought for us the beautiful model of the D.N.A. molecule prepared for our pavilion at the Brussels Exhibition, and a half-circular reproduction of a living cell, large enough to be called 'the

igloo' by the studio staff, and explained the complexities of the whole vast conveyor-belt by which multi-cellular organisms had been brought into being, we could not but realise both the capabilities of the materials and the magnificence of their co-operative results. On the physical-chemical side the process, if not fully explained, has at any rate been intelligibly exposed. It was only necessary for us to remember that this splendid example of man's analytical and interpretative power, though it showed in all its amazing detail how life had begun and developed, only told one aspect of the story, and did not throw any direct light upon its nature or meaning or value.

The second event went further than any as yet published to supply the missing and more important part of the story. Few books of scientific theology can have had an origin, a sponsoring and an influence comparable to Teilhard de Chardin's *The Phenomenon of Man*. Its author was a devout Catholic and Jesuit priest. He possessed the two indispensable qualifications of intellectual integrity and imaginative sensitiveness. He had full experience both of religion and of geological, anthropological and biological science. During his life-time he lived loyally under the discipline of his order and was forbidden by his Church to publish his work. After his death an international committee of eminent scientists sponsored the production of his books, and after five volumes had appeared in France, an English translation of the first of them was published in Britain and America with an introduction by his friend Sir Julian Huxley. Translations of his other books will soon appear.

It is, I think, unnecessary to attempt any detailed account of the book, for although it is not easy, since it demands acquaintance with a wide range both of knowledge and of ideas, and is written to some extent in a vocabulary of its own, its main scope and principal characteristics are not only familiar but have been freely discussed. It is an interpretation of life seen steadily and whole, by a man for whom the universe is one and meaningful, for whom all data are relevant, and who scrutinizes all our world from the standpoint not only of its origins but of its present achievement and future prospects. Throughout his work he displays an integrity which faces all the facts; he discusses all the problems, and is not afraid as a good scientist to frame and sustain his hypotheses. That he does so with an immense respect for those who differ from him, with an absence of dogmatism and a sensitive honesty of judgment, gives his book an authority and a 'sweet-reasonableness' which commends his conclusions even when they are unfamiliar or, as sometimes, uncompromising. When in a broadcast debate a rather brash zoologist summed up by saying that, in claiming to have reached his conclusions by scientific methods Teilhard was in his view dishonest, most of us must have been amazed. Such a verdict seemed both spiritually insensitive and intellectually obtuse.

For the real greatness of Teilhard de Chardin[3] as compared with almost all the rest of us, whether we are religious or scientific, is that we still keep the two worlds in separate compartments. The religious man does not realise the implications of The Royal Society's motto or St. Paul's instruction to examine everything and so sift out and hold what proves itself good. The scientist accepts Francis Bacon's fundamental blunder and takes it for granted that the evidence of physical events must be tested by observation and experiment while that for religion is in a wholly different category. He glibly accepts a belief in two worlds, that of fact and that of fancy, reverses Plato's estimate of their respective validity, and regards it (apparently) as dishonest to test religious claims by the same method as that applied to materialistic. But this testing is, of course, precisely what enquirers like Teilhard, or, to compare small with great, myself have advocated and practised. Fifty-five years ago I was, if I may confess it, a scientist and a materialist at a time when a genuine materialism was dominant and aggressive: but I was aware that religion had been a primary and universal human characteristic, and that today many professing Christians displayed a quality for which it was not easy to find an atheistic explanation. So, after my degree, I studied Mendelian genetics with Bateson, and Christian doctrine with Bethune-Baker, and I can testify that in both we applied an exactly similar procedure—collect your data, test and scrutinise and compare them, frame a hypothesis, test it by appropriate experiments and by reference to parallel cases, relate the resultant revised theory to the general body of relevant knowledge—there is nothing patented or peculiar about the much vaunted principles of scientific research; they are in embryo as old as humanity and are or should be of universal applicability.

If this contention was even then, as I was convinced, plain sense, it is far more evidently valid today when, as every evolutionist admits, we are realising the failure of the traditional dualisms, body and soul, discovery and revelation, science and religion, and have come to see the unity and coherence of the whole field of our experience, and so in the present case realise that the evolutionary process does not end with the coming of man, and that human history down to the present hour is in sequence with, and the latest chapter of, the age-old story. I cannot believe that most scientists would dispute this, or would easily deny that, just as room must be found in it for the psychic-intellectual qualities emerging in men, and as any adequate interpretation of evolution must take them into account, so any honest student must also recognise that religion, like any other deep-seated and general human interest, is an essential element in his study. When it is said that Teilhard is dishonest because after full examination he accepts religion as part of the evidence for the

[3]For an admirable account of this cf. P Chauchard in *Syntheses*, July 19, pp. 119-20.

character of the evolutionary process, I can only retaliate that this seems to me a much less dishonest line than to deny dogmatically and in a fashion that contradicts our obligation to examine all the evidence, that religion can be scientifically studied or to state dogmatically that it is not worth studying. Does any modern biologist really wish to restrict science to the realm of weight and measurement or to interpret life in terms of the mechanistic 'behaviorism' of which even its inventor has long ago despaired?

Of course, this does not mean that the scientist is committed to the acceptance of the evidence or the criteria that satisfy Teilhard. I am only concerned to maintain that, to explain evolution without considering all the evidence supplied by human nature and history, is to be false to the continuity of the process and to rule out the most fully developed of the means of interpretation. For surely a principal value of evolutionary biology is, that it has constrained us to see the whole process as all of a piece, and yet as genuinely disclosing progress and the emergence of novelty. No doubt its potentialities were present from the beginning, whichever of the two chief current theories we adopt for that event. Radiant energy was not a merely random conglomerate: the comparison of it to a Meccano set and the subsequent disclosure of its inherent capabilities abolish the idea of basic randomness. As we contemplate its origin we must with Teilhard never forget the wholeness of the process to which it gives rise; it must be judged not merely by its beginning but by its achievement. Its present level is for us a far more accessible and important criterion than any other—and that level must be estimated not by the surviving vestiges of primitive or even of animal life but by the finest products of our own race, by the saints and heroes, by 'the measure of the stature of the fulness of the Christ'.

This does not of course mean that we should ignore or underestimate the importance of analytical methods, of physics and chemistry, and our own bodies. It is as absurd to treat the living organism as an imprisoned spirit as to degrade it to the level of an automaton or an electronic calculating machine. We are persons, and the whole of our world is for us illuminated by that fact. A psycho-somatic outlook such as medicine, and philosophy, are formulating for us, becomes inevitable. We must make a clean sweep of the traditional dualism of 'the ghost in the machine' and face the whole of our experience, so far as we may, consistently from the new standpoint. It is part of the greatness of Teilhard that he has so completely adopted a consistent attitude and in applying it to the vast range of problems with which he is concerned discloses to us, often to our surprise, how readily his position enables him to dispose of current perplexities. He is always generous towards those who differ from him whether it be the materialists who will not accept his pan-psychism or the traditionalists who cling to a literal interpretation of

Genesis. But in the last chapters where he develops the full, and therefore explicit, religious significance of his argument, his conviction enables him to controvert unanswerably and in a few sentences[4] modern heresies, like the pessimist's denial of all progress, which proceed from our obsession with beliefs founded upon pre-Copernican and literalist interpretations of scriptural and theological dogmas. Repeatedly and upon subjects on which most of us are still arguing, he enunciates principles manifestly inherent in the nature of the evolutionary process which should condition our thinking and deliver us from our errors. See, for example, his insistence that the individual can only find himself in increasing collectivity since 'here as elsewhere in the universe the whole shows itself to be greater than the simple sum of the elements of which it is formed'.[5]

It is difficult without detailed exposition and a large array of quotations to give an adequate impression of the coherence and solidarity of his position. This is probably the basic significance of his work, that whereas many others have examined on similar lines some at least of the subjects discussed by him, their conclusions have been manifestly indecisive and not infrequently self-contradictory, especially when they have dealt with religion. We have waited for a generation or more for a thorough-going statement of an evolutionary cosmology and anthropology; and for lack of it have failed to realise how drastically its acceptance will challenge our traditional dogmas and institutions. Hence, in all the churches we have felt and shown that we are ill-equipped to meet the challenge and seize the opportunities of the new age. One or two Christians in my lifetime (and for me Conway Lloyd Morgan has been the chief) have given us a full and consistent expression of the creative process as modern science enables us to understand it. Teilhard has fulfilled the expectations which their work aroused. His language will probably need clarification, the points on which he expresses hesitation must be examined more fully, the controversial issues (and some of his contentions are revolutionary and some perhaps speculative) must be debated. But when all is said here is an exposition which will not only blaze the trail for other pioneers, but enable us all to recognise and reject as mistaken much of our own antiquated ideas and activities.

This last task is the one to which it seems specially important to direct attention; for it is crucial for the present situation, and particularly so for those who are concerned with the reaction of Christians to it. Now, with the removal of the barriers of time and space and the challenge to those of race, class and sex we have the possibility and need for world unity; with the release of nuclear energy we have not only the threat of world-suicide but the resources adequate to remove starvation and

[4]Cf., for example, pp. 232-3.
[5]p. 178.

drudgery and raise the whole level of human life. One world or none must be our claim, and St. Paul's dream of a single human-divine community in which mankind could find unity, freedom and fulfilment could come true. Christendom has made some move towards its own unification; it has allowed rather grudgingly small acts of reunion; it has tolerated, though with difficulty, a friendlier attitude towards other religions; and it has not suppressed the few who have striven to understand and co-operate with the thought and achievements of science and the movements for international peace. But it has, in the main, signally failed to read the signs of the times, or to give a lead on any of the great issues in which action was demanded, or even to equip itself with a relevant theology, a communal ethic, or an appropriate administration.

It is, of course, inevitable that in a period of rapid and unpredictable change human traditions, philosophies and organisations should need drastic and revolutionary reconstruction; and in any case, as we are learning to admit, the intellectual, legal and institutional expression of personal relationships is inevitably only approximate and may well be distorting. But such maladjustments are capable of reform—and at the moment to reform them is becoming almost a matter of life and death; and for such a task Christendom has a unique qualification. Anyone who takes seriously the three basic conditions of life abundant as St. Paul declared them in his earliest letter and elaborated them in the sequence of his writings, will be confirmed in his confidence that the fundamental experience and relationships disclosed by Jesus are indeed a true image of our goal and wholly relevant to our present need. The essential quality of life by commitment to God—'I have been crucified with Christ: I am alive—yet not I; Christ is alive in me'—its universality transcending all barriers and disunity—'neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female; you are all one person in Christ Jesus'—its moral character combining both the new beatitudes of the Gospel and the old virtues of the Epicurean, Stoic and Roman ideals—love and joy, peace and fortitude, compassion and goodness, faith which is self-commital, meekness which is self-effacement, temperance which is God-control'—these three sayings represent the character of the Christian community which the Apostle envisaged, served and interpreted, and which we today have the possibility and necessity of attaining.

But if this is so, there is a vast amount of re-examination and restatement to be made, and for these neither biblical nor theological language and imagery are usually appropriate. The basic experiences which they interpret will, I believe, be vindicated as valid. But the translations of them are in idiom and ideas that too often contradict the experience as we now apprehend it. The nature of God, the problem of evil and pain, the nature and status of man, the significance and mode of redemption, the ethical standards of individual and community, the whole business

of inspiration, the whole meaning of eschatology—these and other fields of belief are affected, often radically, by our new outlook and knowledge. As at present expressed they are usually either defective or self-contradictory. And if these are revised, the institutions that should embody them will also be found seriously and obstructively defective.

REVIEWS

HERALD OF REUNION

For some time before the appearance of this definitive biography[1] it was rumoured that the then Dixie Professor of Ecclesiastical History at Cambridge was working on a life of Wake. Few, however, can have envisaged the two fine volumes which, in due course, have issued from the University Press; a veritable 'magnum opus', and the fruit of years of careful research into such formidable sources as the Wake manuscripts at Oxford, and the collections of correspondence at Geneva and other Swiss cities.

First and foremost, William Wake emerges from these pages as a herald of the modern Ecumenical Movement. It was his ecumenical programme for the union of the churches that was the most outstanding of his achievements, and it is here, declares his biographer, that he 'stands almost without peer in the long succession of holders of the see of St. Augustine'.

The young chaplain to the English envoy at the Court of Louis XIV, whose catholicity was such that on Good Friday in the year 1684, he could begin the day by attending the Roman liturgy, then go on to conduct the English service, and finally join with the French Protestants in their worship, was in later life to become the Archbishop who strove for Christian reunion. It was a striving which showed itself alike in his letters with the leading representatives of Gallicanism concerning the union of the English and French churches, as in those with the heads of foreign Reformed churches suggesting that at least a common confession of faith and liturgy might be adopted by the Anglicans and themselves. As we read these documents, we marvel at Wake's liberal-mindedness, and wistfully reflect how different might have been the religious history of the last two hundred years, had his noble efforts achieved the success they deserved.

In an unpublished autobiography, he spoke of his determination 'to give all arguments their proper weight; and particularly in matters of religion, to incline to nothing but the truth and to embrace it on what side soever I should find it to lie'. There can be no hesitation in saying that, in his relations with his continental brethren, he carried out this principle to the letter.

Yet, that is not to pretend that Wake always managed to overcome the prejudices and limitations of his age. There was, for example, his complete failure to follow up the contacts already made by the Nonjurors with representatives of the Eastern Orthodox churches. On occasions, too, his correspondence reveals traces of unfairness, as when he describes the Deists as 'wicked men, who, because they have so much reason to wish that our religion and the revelations of it against ungodly and impenitent sinners should not be true, do therefore use their utmost endeavours to

[1] *William Wake, Archbishop of Canterbury* 1657-1737, by The Rev. Norman Sykes (Cambridge University Press, 2 vols. 84/-).

flatter themselves and persuade others that it is not true'; and the Nonjurors as those who have 'violated the unity of the church for this only reason, that we have decided to obey the laws of the realm'. Finally, the attitude he adopted in refusing to support a measure to repeal the Occasional Conformity and Schism Acts, which were so unjust to Dissenters, is hard to understand, in view of his more than usually broad outlook.

In fact, it has to be admitted that there were certain qualities lacking in the Archbishop's relations with those nearer home. Not that he neglected his episcopal duties—the lengthy chapter of nearly a hundred pages on 'The Office and Work of a Bishop' dispels any doubts on that score. 'He was a model of industry, diligence and zeal', says his biographer: but he also remarks elsewhere, that he was hypersensitive, and fundamentally unfitted by temperament for the rough-and-tumble of political life. Clearly, during his later years, Wake was altogether eclipsed by Edmund Gibson, Bishop of London, and although he held on to the primacy until his death at the advanced age of eighty, he had in reality, withdrawn from public life some ten years before.

Apart from the new light which these volumes throw upon their central figure, they contain many other features of interest, as for instance, an important chapter on the validity of Anglican Orders, various glimpses into the church life of two and a half centuries ago, and an intriguing account of the Coronation of George II and his queen, with all its strange mishaps which to the Englishman of today seem almost incredible.

Dr. Norman Sykes's great work will be of value towards a clearer appreciation of the Church of England, not only in the eighteenth century, but also during much of its subsequent history. I shall certainly find it necessary to turn to these volumes time and time again.

GORDON HUELIN

A LIVING UNIVERSE

This is a lively, stimulating and courageous book,[1] which reminds one of Professor Coulson's *Science and Christian Belief,* though it it a good deal simpler. Mr. Pilkington is a biologist and a Christian, and the main assertion of his book is that Christianity has nothing to fear in facing truth, from whatever source it may come; and that scientific discovery must be welcomed as contributing to religious understanding. He examines some of the most fundamental Christian beliefs, and finds encouragement rather than cause for doubt in some of the most startling discoveries of modern science.

Mr. Pilkington begins by insisting that belief must be in harmony with reason. He firmly rejects any idea of a flight from reason, and will make no terms with a 'God of the gaps' position either. A study of scientific faith leads him to the statement that 'a Christian doctrine is the precise counterpart of a scientific hypothesis', and the further statement that 'if doctrine has sometimes to be changed, then that is surely not a sign of weakness in the system of belief, but rather an indication of clearer vision'. 'Dogma', he declares, 'whether in science or religion, is dangerous; for when the formulation of ideas passes right out of the realms of human experience, is can often mislead.'

On this basis Mr. Pilkington discusses the problems raised by the scientific view of creation and the nature of life. Of the former he says 'The creation is not cutside God, or under Him, but within Him'—as implied in the logos doctrine of the fourth Gospel; and he does not think that a Christian should be in any way perplexed by

[1] *World Without End,* by Roger Pilkington (Macmillan; pp. 165, 12/6).

the vastness of the universe or of the evolutionary time-scale. Of the latter he asserts boldly that he hopes to 'see the day when some biochemist receives a Nobel Prize for the first synthesis of life', and that he 'would like to think that the same scientist will receive telegraphed congratulations rather than abuse from the Christian churches. For all that he will have done is to demonstrate that the very stuff of the universe is not dead and mechanical, but vibrant from end to end with the germs of awareness of God, of which to be alive is an essential requirement.'

Mr. Pilkington then turns to the New Testament and discusses the authenticity of its account of Jesus, with particular reference to His miracles and resurrection. These chapters are less satisfactory than the rest of the book, for their author's knowledge of the work of New Testament scholarship is not up-to-date. 'St. Mark' he says, 'is based on the direct recollection and oft-repeated accounts of Peter and other early missionaries.' 'Q' is 'written perhaps by Matthew the tax-collector'. There is no mention of form-criticism, or even of the forces operative on the tradition during the oral period; and the fourth Gospel seems to be regarded as on the same historical footing as the first three. As a result Mr. Pilkington makes rather heavy weather of the Gospel miracles (other than those of healing), and is apt to resort to rationalising explanations instead of frankly classing them as legend. One feels the same hesitancy in his treatment of the Gospel stories of the Resurrection.

The book ends with a discussion of the problem of pain and suffering in relation to evolution, and a particularly good chapter on conscience and free-will, in which Mr. Pilkington refuses to be intimidated by the randomness of genetical inheritance. He ends as he began, by saying that a Christian has nothing to fear in facing truth, from whatever source it may come. 'Science', he adds, 'as a revelation of part of the total truth, has often imbued certain elements of the Christian faith and doctrine with a grandeur and depth of meaning of which I would otherwise have been unaware. Here and there it has swept away the cobwebs spun by mediæval spiders across the windows of human perception, but in doing so it has revealed more clearly the astounding beauty of the view beyond.' Liberals will be grateful for a book written in this spirit.

H. K. Luce

SHORT NOTICES

As Professor Knowles says in his foreword to this biography,[1] 'when Edmund Bishop died at the age of 70 in 1917, his name was virtually unknown save to a couple of dozen scholars scattered over four or five countries' in Europe. That was not perhaps unreasonable. Edmund Bishop was one of the High Church converts to Rome in the mid 60's of the last century. He was a not too successful civil servant, and when he left the Queen's service in November 1885 to become a postulant at Downside there was little to suggest future eminence even as 'ghost-writer' for Cardinal Gasquet or as a liturgiologist. Even so, his published work was specialised and save for a few tardy contributions to the *Journal of Theological Studies,* little of it appeared outside Roman Catholic periodicals. The four pages which Professor Knowles devotes to him is a reasonable memorial to his personality and his contribution as a scholar.

Mr. Abercrombie's work, however, though ludicrously excessive, is not without interest. It penetrates some of the spirit of late-Victorian Catholicism, displaying its concentration on ecclesiastical affairs only, and evident lack of concern for the great

[1] *The Life and Work of Edmund Bishop,* by Nigel Abercrombie (Longmans 1959. pp. 539 + xv and one plate. 70s.).

social and political movements of the day. It was sect life, and thus the contribution which middle-class Catholics made to the welfare of the country as a whole was limited. Theirs, as Bishop seems to suggest himself, was an attitude of rebellion against their times, with little constructive alternative to offer. On this purely intellectual religion, Modernism made its impact. Some of the author's best pages are devoted to describing the mental gymnastics of Catholics who saw the force of the Modernist case and had not the courage to follow Mivart and Tyrell to their logical conclusion. They were too proud to admit their miscalculations and retrace their steps to the Anglican Communion. For their intellectual cowardice they paid with years of argumentative misery. The nineteenth century and, for that matter, the twentieth, is littered with the remains of groups and individuals who imagined that the genius of Rome was liberal and found, too late, how mistaken they were. Bishop shared the tensions of his contemporaries, and a short work, dealing with the thought of intelligent lay Catholics in England 1880-1914 would have been useful. But, all in all, the space between the beginning and end of this book is too great.

W. H. C. Frend

Documents of the Baptismal Liturgy, by E. C. Whitaker (S.P.C.K., 1960. 30/-).

Here are collected and translated some forty passages concerning Baptism from writers of the earliest times to the ninth century in both the Western and Eastern Church. The order is the Ante-Nicene Church, Syria, the Armenian Rite, the Byzantine rite, Egypt, the African rite, Spain, Milan, Rome, and Gallican documents. It is a most useful compilation, and economical of labour for the student. In most cases the translation is by the original English editor of these texts and not by the present compiler. It is a great pity that an Index has not been provided. At a time when Baptismal revision is to the fore, it is important to appreciate the early Church's views and forms of this sacrament. One obvious difference between older and later practice is that the former was lengthy in preparation and in actual form—today the time factor is important. In the older ages nobody appears to have been troubled by any lack of intelligibility in the rite; it seems that the more educated one becomes the more is the demand to understand rites and ceremonies. Symbolism does not come easily to the modern mind, and Baptism is full of symbolism.

Patrick Cowley

Not as the Scribes, by J. Middleton Murry (S.C.M. Press. 18/-. pp. 255).

Dr. A. R. Vidler has edited this book, since Murry's death, and writes an introduction. It consists of 53 addresses, most of them delivered, during and since the war, to the farming community which he founded. The book's title is justified, for there can be no doubt of the speaker's sincerity or of the fact that he speaks out of his own experience. Those who remember Murry's *Life of Jesus*, published in 1926, will recognise the same insistence on the reality and completeness of Jesus' humanity, the same rejection of the miraculous, and the same conviction, to quote from one of the addresses, that 'Love is the beginning and Love the end of the Christian revelation'.

In fact, these addresses are essentially variations on that main theme; in pacifism during the war (though Murry renounced it later), in personal relationships, and in Holy Communion, in which, somewhat unexpectedly in view of his unorthodoxy, Murry's mysticism finds the centre of his religious experience. Read as tentative probings into the fundamental questions of human experience, the addresses are provocative, interesting and essentially Christian. But their author's personality does not seem to be sufficiently harmonised to enable the book to present a clear or convincing philosophy of life.

H. K. Luce

THE MODERN CHURCHMEN'S UNION

The Conference: The attendance at the Conference was the highest since the war. There were 100 residents and 20 other full members. Visitors to the Conference included a Lady Priest from Sweden; Dr. S. Keleny, Vice-Chairman of the Divorce Law Reform Union and the Rev. M. F. Charles of Singapore.

The success of the Conference reflects the hard work of the Conference Secretary and her helpers, and of the Chairman and the Readers of the Papers.

The Annual Meeting: The Annual Meeting was held at Newnham College on 4 August. A copy of the accounts for 1959 is enclosed in this issue of *The Modern Churchman*.

The following were elected members of the Council for the next three years:

Canon E. F. Carpenter
Rev. F. H. Cleobury
Rev. A. J. Drewett
Ven. M. T. Dunlop
Rev. C. E. Seamer
Rev. H. C. Snape
Rev. P. Weir
Rev. P. Were
Mr. J. Wren-Lewis

At a subsequent meeting of the Council the Rev. J. D. Pearce-Higgins was elected Chairman; the Rev. W. G. Fallows Vice-Chairman; Mr. W. G. S. Russell Treasurer. The following were co-opted as members of the Council for a further year:

Canon R. E. T. Allen
Rev. L. B. Cross
Lt. Col. H. H. King
Rev. F. I. L. Rees
Mrs. C. P. G. Rose
Rev. D. E. H. Whiteley

Amendments of the Constitution were made so that in the future nominations for the Council may be received at the meeting (instead of a month before) and members are eligible for immediate re-election at the end of their three-year period.

Increase in Subscriptions: The Annual Meeting decided to increase the minimum subscription to £1 per annum, and to ask members, if they were able, to subscribe more to further the cause of the Union. The price of *The Modern Churchman* to non-members was increased to 4/6 for the ordinary numbers, and to 6/- for the 'Conference' numbers.

Conference 1961: Next year's Conference will be held at St. Hilda's College, Oxford, from 24 to 28 July, the Chairman will be the Rev. W. G. Fallows, Principal of Ripon Hall.

Dr. H. D. A. Major: A message of good wishes was sent from the Conference to Dr. Major on his retirement from the living of Merton, where he has been Vicar since 1929.

The Diary of a Misfit Priest

W. ROWLAND JONES

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